3 days of rains cause floods in Mindanao, Visayas

Story on PAGE A2

WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Mavs make it all-Texas final in the West** SPORTS /A28
- **Taiwan SARS crisis worsens** WORLD /A11
- **Danding still undecided on 2004 election plans** ACROSS /A13

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Study shows texting can't hurt grammar

By Pam Pastor

FEARS about the negative effects of text messaging on the youth's grammar and spelling seem to be unfounded, according to a De La Salle University researcher.

WE STIL KNOW HOW 2 SPEL.TPID LNG 5 TXT!

STUDY/ A17

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph   Monday, May 19, 2003 ★★ 88 pages / 9 sections / vol. 18 / no. 160   P15   website: www.inq7.net

Bombs rain on MILF lairs

AFP claims 80 Moro rebels killed

By the PDI Mindanao Bureau

ZAMBOANGA CITY—A day after President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered "selective" attacks on "embedded terrorist cells" in Mindanao, the death toll has risen to more than 80 MILF rebels, the military's top general in the area said yesterday.

Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko said air strikes using OV-10 bombers and an artillery barrage using 105-mm and 155-mm howitzers started in at least four points in Mindanao shortly after the President issued her directive on Saturday.

Kyamko said at least 121 rounds of 250-pound bombs had been dropped on selected areas in the Zamboanga peninsula and in Lanao del Norte; near the former main base of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Maguindanao, and in the Liguasan Marsh, particularly on the Buliok complex in Pikit, North Cotabato, since Saturday afternoon.

"Until now we are continuing our shelling in Lanao because the weather is good. We stopped the bombings in the Zamboanga peninsula because of bad weather, but we managed to drop six bombs early this morning using OV-10 Bronco (planes)," Kyamko said during a

BOMBS/ A19

'Attack order means more bloodshed'

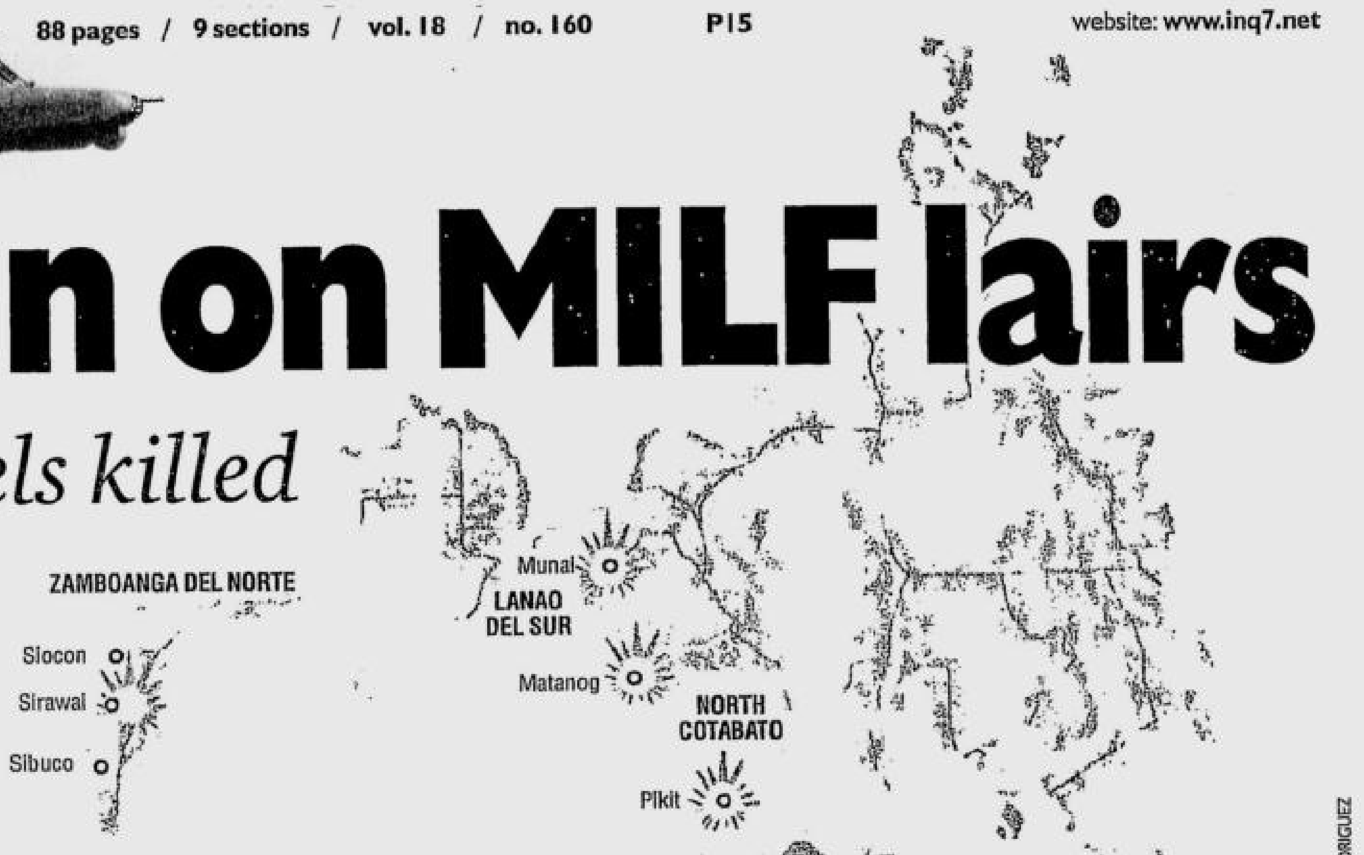
By Christine Avendaño and Norman Bordadora

SEN. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday urged the President to recall her order for the Armed Forces to bomb "embedded terrorist cells" in Mindanao, saying this was a "prescription for more bloodshed."

The order was tantamount to "state-sponsored terrorism," Pimentel, one of two senators from Mindanao, said in a phone interview.

Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr.,

'ATTACK/ A19



INFOGRAPHIC: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

AT A GLANCE

- New military campaign launched Saturday
- AFP attacks MILF positions in four provinces
- Over 30,000 pounds of munitions used in two days
- AFP claims 17 MILF rebels have surrendered
- MILF claims killing at least eight soldiers
- At least 30,000 civilians have been forced to evacuate in Lanao alone

PRESIDENT Macapagal and First Gentleman Mike Arroyo arrive at the Los Angeles airport at the start of a three-day state visit to the United States.

JERRY CARUAL/PCPO-MALACAÑANG

GMA STATE VISIT

US to ease flow of OFW remittances

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

LOS ANGELES (Via PLDT)—On the eve of her arrival in Washington today, President Macapagal-Arroyo announced before nearly 4,000 Filipino-Americans here that she had reaped the first fruit of her state visit.

In a speech delivered at the newly built Cathedral of Our Lady of Angels in the downtown area, Ms Macapagal said the US government would launch a project to facilitate the flow of remittances from overseas Filipinos around the world to the Philippines.

"This project will improve the lives of millions of Filipinos by lowering the cost of remittance transactions and by making it easier for funds to flow to the Philippines from the United States and around the world," Ms Macapagal said at a Mass held minutes after she arrived here from Manila.

Some 7 million OFWs send at least $7 billion every year to their relatives in the Philippines.

"Filipino-Americans constitute 34 percent of overseas Filipinos, but you contribute 71 percent of foreign exchange remittances," the President told the gathering. The 500,000 Filipinos in Los Angeles is the biggest concentration of Filipinos in the United States and ranks third to Saudi Arabia, which has one million, and Malaysia, which hosts 700,000 Filipinos.

This huge contribution translates to education, housing and anti-poverty programs in the Philippines, according to the President.

"That is why I always say that you are not overseas Filipino workers. Rather, you are overseas Filipino investors," Ms Macapagal said. "I renew my call for our overseas Filipino investors to continue to support our economy so that our aspiration of liberating our people from poverty could be fully realized."

Heherson Alvarez, presidential adviser on overseas Filipino workers, later told reporters that US Ambassador to Manila Francis Ricciardone had informed Ms Macapagal about the US role in facilitating the remittance of OFWs before she left Manila

US TO EASE/ A0

Mindanao conflict linked to US aid plan

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo and her extra-large retinue congregate in Washington this week, despite the SARS epidemic, to witness her conferment as satrap of the emperor of the new Rome—President George W. Bush.

Like other vassals of the United States in the "coalition of the willing," Ms Macapagal will sit on the right side of Bush, who has divided the world into the "good" and the "bad." As a member of the "good," she will receive her reward in line with the Bush dictum—those who are not with us are our enemies.

For the post-Saddam Hussein era in Iraq, following the swift military collapse of the regime is occasion for Bush to reward his allies and to punish those who opposed the coalition's invasion of Iraq. The Macapagal administration has been one of the few countries which uncritically joined the US-led global war on terrorism since Sept. 11, 2002 and which has consistently backed this campaign despite the fact that Washington failed to win authorization to invade Iraq from the UN Se-

MINDANAO/ A20

2 suicide bombers hit Jerusalem

JERUSALEM—A suicide bomber blew himself up on a Jerusalem bus early Sunday, killing seven passengers and wounding 20 others. A second bomber blew himself up on the outskirts of the city, but no one else was killed.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon postponed a trip to Washington for talks with US President George W. Bush on a peace plan after receiving news of the attacks.

In Morocco, authorities on Sunday sought to piece together the plot behind the wave of attacks that left 41 dead in Casablanca, as the police announced more than 30 arrests.

Five coordinated attacks, carried out by 14 suicide bombers—one of whom survived—killed 28 weekend revelers enjoying a Friday night out in the economic capital of the north African country.

Sunday newspapers were filled with gruesome images from the suicide blasts, which matched a pattern of worldwide attacks that many observers have linked to the al-Qaida network.

The Casablanca attacks, like the triple suicide bombings last Monday in the Saudi capital Riyadh, came amid warnings that Osama bin Laden's organization was planning fresh strikes in the wake of the US-led war on Iraq.

2 SUICIDE/ A18

Malacañang cries foul over travel advisories

By Carlito Pablo, Philip Tubeza and Norman Bordadora

MALACAÑANG yesterday cried foul over adverse travel advisories issued last week by its partners in the so-called "coalition of the willing."

"We think such travel advisories are unfair," Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao said.

Just the same, Manila police increased security at likely terrorist targets in the capital yesterday, citing the terrorist attacks in Morocco and Saudi Arabia and the absence of President Macapagal-Arroyo, who is on a state visit to the United States.

Besides the US Embassy on Roxas Boulevard, the Vatican's nunciature on Taft Avenue has also been secured.

"We are not letting our guard down. We are continuously monitoring the situation and we already have contingency plans and the necessary built-in security in place," said Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong, Western Police District director.

But Bulaong emphasized that the WPD had not received any

MALACAÑANG/ A18

TOO many cooks didn't spoil this mammoth serving of Pampanga's famous dish, sizzling "sisig," during the Grand Sisig Festival held in Barangay Balibago in Angeles City. The event was meant to shed off the city's reputation as a prostitution hub.

TONETTE OREJAS/PDI CENTRAL LUZON DESK

Angeles City sizzles with largest 'sisig'

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

ANGELES CITY—It was one giant gastronomic attraction and a tempting invitation to an endless night of drinking.

An iron plate, 4.8 meters wide and 9.7 meters long, was used to prepare the city's biggest serving of the local dish *sisig* during the Giant Sisig Festival in Barangay Balibago here on Saturday night.

About 40 cooks mixed 240 kilograms

ANGELES/ A20

Second FRONTPAGE

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme northern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over eastern Mindanao.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/05/19/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Widespread Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Widespread Rains

Heavy rains flood Mindanao, Cebu

COTABATO CITY—Days of heavy rains flooded low-lying regions of Mindanao and Cebu City in the Visayas, and displaced thousands of people in central, southern and northern Mindanao.

Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant for Mindanao, said the floods were caused by the heavy downpour aggravated by the swelling of rivers and lakes.

Even as authorities said they were still consolidating the casualty and disaster figures, local governments have started releasing food aid.

In Tulunan town in North Cotabato, a two-year-old boy was reportedly killed after he drowned in floodwaters but authorities said they were still confirming the incident.

On Thursday, three children and a woman were buried alive in a landslide triggered by rains at a small-scale mining area in Sitio Panganason, Barangay Kingking, Pantukan, Compostela Valley.

Vice Mayor Roberto Blas of Pigkawayan, North Cotabato, reported that at least 13 villages in his town have been inundated, with floodwaters in some areas reaching up to five feet.

Blas said some 60 families in Barangay Presbitero had to abandon their homes as floodwaters rose starting Friday night. Thirty more families from Barangay Capayuran also fled to higher ground after rampaging waters swept away their houses.

Lita Inok, director of the Office of Civil Defense in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said a number of towns in Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, especially those located near lakes and rivers, were also swamped.

Inok warned residents living near riverbanks and marshes to leave as their houses could be swept away by rampaging floodwaters.

The extent of the damage in Pagalungan, Pagagawan, Sultan sa Barongis and Datu Piang towns was still being determined, Inok said.

In General Santos City, some 65 families from at least four coastal villages were displaced after strong waves battered their houses early Saturday .

The City Social Welfare and Development Office said the affected villages were Bula, Dadiangas South, Labangal and Dadiangas West.

Residents said they were awakened around 3 a.m. as their homes were pounded by huge waves from Sarangani Bay. At least 10 huts were destroyed and three motorized boats moored at Lions Beach in Barangay Tinago were crushed. But there have been no reports of casualties.

Turbulent seas drove a huge turtle ashore to the delight of residents in Silway, Barangay Dadiangas West. Some people tried to kill it but backed off when warned that the animal was protected and was on the endangered species list.

In Cebu City, heavy rains on Friday night flooded the city's major streets and other areas, forcing more than 700 families to flee their homes.

The Cebu City Disaster and Coordinating Council (CCDCC) reported that nine urban barangays were badly affected by flash floods.

Landslides were also reported in the mountain villages of Buhisan and Busay but no one was reported injured.

Councilor Gerardo Carillo, CCDCC action officer, said a total of 733 families, or 2,007 individuals, were evacuated from the flooded barangays. *Charlie C. Señase and Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau, and Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Aside from polls, Namfrel asked to watch over books

By J. Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) will take on another important task to add to its job of ensuring clean and honest elections.

The election watchdog has been asked by the Department of Education to ensure that textbooks are delivered to the intended beneficiary schools.

Education Undersecretary Jose Luis Martin Gascon said in an interview over dyLA radio here yesterday that the department had tapped Namfrel to monitor the delivery of textbooks to the country's schools.

Gascon said Namfrel agreed to help monitor the delivery of textbooks as this could serve as a test run for the 2004 national elections.

In a mammoth bidding held last November, considered the largest in the department's history, the DepEd acquired P1.4-billion worth of textbooks.

Because many publishing companies participated in the bidding, the average cost of the books was reduced from P90 to P30 each.

As a result, Gascon said they expect the student-to-book ratio this school year to be one is to one.

But education officials were worried that corruption could prevent books from reaching the schools.

To prevent this, the DepEd launched the delivery monitoring program with the help of civil society groups, including Namfrel.

Gascon said the suppliers have been given a deadline of "five days per site" to deliver the books.

He said the quantity of the books and the delivery sites were coordinated in such a way that the deliveries would be easy to monitor.

There are 6,000 delivery sites for an estimated 40,000 textbooks for public elementary and high schools nationwide.

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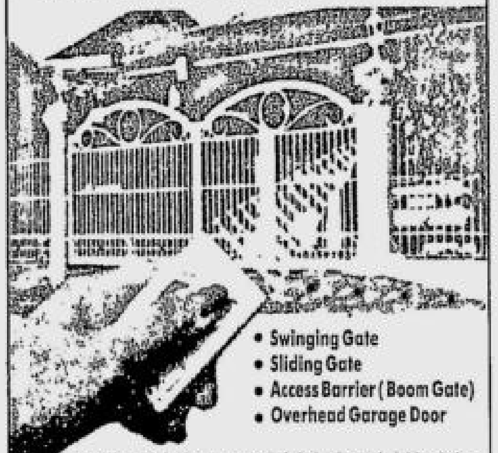

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NAGOYA	216	380	BAHRAIN	308	700
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SEOUL	175	365	SFO	430	710
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			EUROPE	350	710

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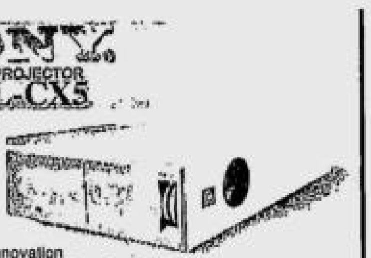

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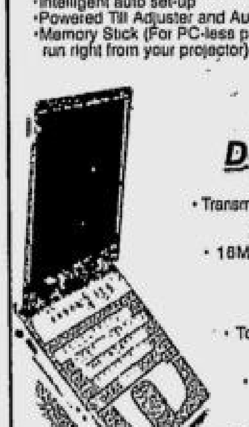

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BANGKOK	160	225	BEGAWAN	210	330	GUAM	325	330
TOKYO	270	450	XIAMEN	180	350	MACAU	140	180
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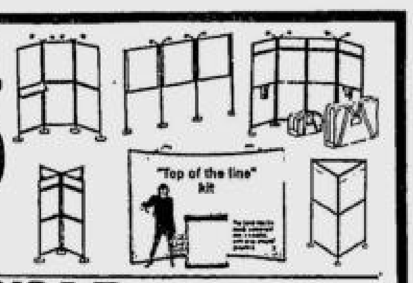

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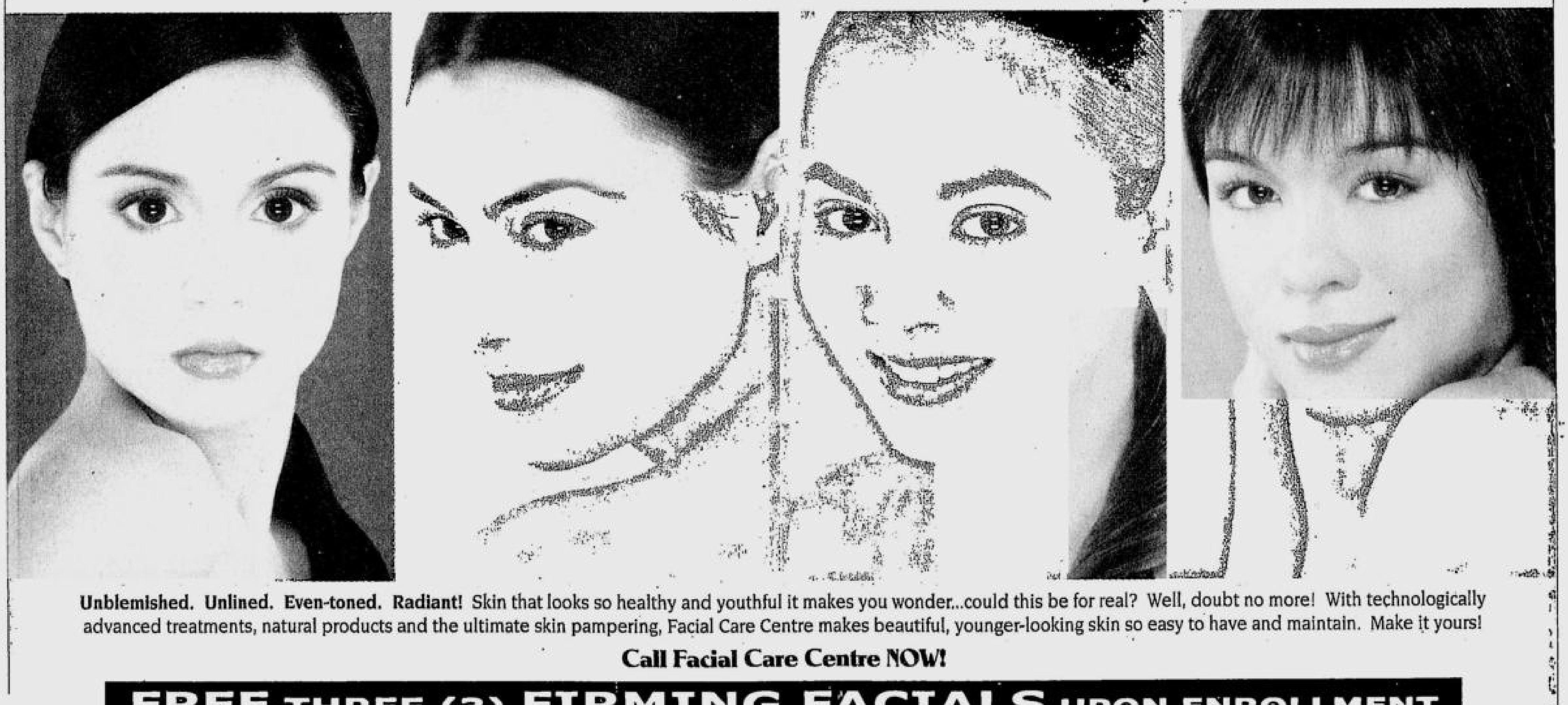

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'Gloves are off' after Abu hostages' escape

NORIE Bendijo, center, and Flora Montulo are welcomed to freedom by President Macapagal-Arroyo at the Naia last night before she left for her US state visit.

ROGER MARGALLO

THE ESCAPE of the last two Jehovah's Witnesses who were held hostage by the Abu Sayyaf will pave the way for a new offensive against the kidnap gang in Sulu, the military said yesterday.

This means the military will now be handling the Abu Sayyaf problem "with gloves off," said Brig. Gen. Romeo Tolentino of the military's Joint Task Force Comet, which had been formed to rescue the various hostages taken by the bandits.

The military will not be "pulling any punches" anymore because the Abu Sayyaf will not be able to hide behind their hostages, Tolentino said in a statement.

"We now have an advantage . . . because we always considered the safety of the hostages . . . that was our primordial concern," Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Roy Kyamko said in the same statement released by Camp Aguinaldo yesterday.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had given the Armed Forces 90 days, beginning April 30, to crush, the kidnap for ransom gang.

It was the latest in a series of similar instructions to the military to exterminate the Abu Sayyaf, which gained international notoriety for kidnapping and which the United States has linked to the al-Qaida international terrorist network of Osama bin Laden.

The military said the two hostages, Flora Montulo and Norie Bendijo, escaped from their captors in the jungles of Patikul, Sulu, the other day.

Five weeks ago, two other hostages from the Jehova Witnesses were also able to escape. They were Cleofe Montalo and Emily Mantic.

The four women were among the six Jehovah's Witnesses seized by the Abu Sayyaf in Jolo last August.

The two men in the group were beheaded later that month.

The Abu Sayyaf is now left with only one hostage, Ronald Ulah, a Filipino cook, who was taken from Sipadan, Malaysia more than two years ago with a number of foreigners.

Officials at Camp Aguinaldo said yesterday Ulah may have joined his captors. *Martin Marfil*

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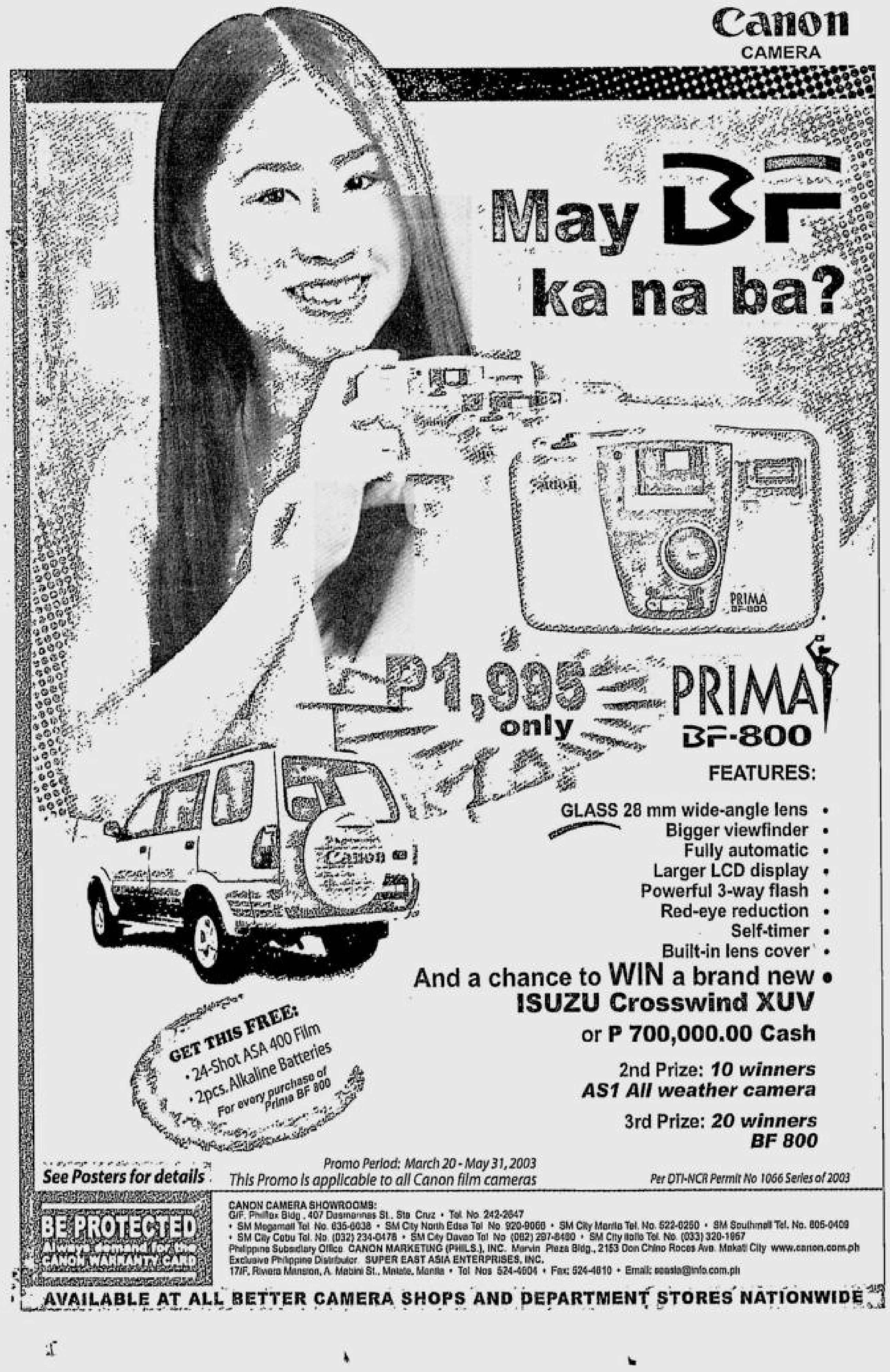

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Politicians barred from rally vs media man's murder

By D. T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—The heavily fractionalized Quezon media community has come together to condemn the murder on Saturday of radio broadcaster Apolinario "Polly" Pobeda and will stage an indignation rally on Tuesday.

The Quezon Tri-Media Group and the Camp Nakar Press Corps, however, stressed the protest action would be limited to members of the media and the immediate relatives of the victim.

"It was agreed the rally would be off-limits to grandstanding politicians who would just capitalize on Polly's death in pursuit of their own agendas," said Johnny Glorioso, dzMM Quezon news correspondent and QMTG senior adviser.

Task force

Senior Supt. Ricardo Padilla, Quezon police chief, has formed a multi-agency task force to investigate Pobeda's murder.

The task force is composed of representatives of the National Bureau of Investigation, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group and the Military Intelligence Group.

Pobeda, 35, was a member of the QTMG board when he was killed. He was shot by two unidentified gunmen on a motorcycle while he was on his way to the station on his own motorcycle Saturday morning. No one has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Noreen Villalba, QTMG president and Pobeda's co-worker, said there was a need for the local media to close ranks and protect each other.

Risky

She described Pobeda's shooting and the recent killings of journalists in the country as "reminiscent of the dark years of the dictatorship, where being the harbinger of truth as a profession was considered hazardous and risky," referring to the martial law regime of Ferdinand Marcos.

Pobeda was described in an Agence France Presse report as a communist guerrilla turned journalist.

He reportedly quit the communist New People's Army rebel group some years ago and reinvented himself as a radio commentator at the Con-Amor Broadcasting System, a provincial network.

Network president Joselito Ojeda said Pobeda criticized the city government and officials in his radio commentaries. He also offered up "blind items" that told of the foibles of the prominent personalities of Lucena City.

He was the third provincial journalist to be slain in the country in less than two months.

Radio commentator Efren Rafanan was shot dead in Vigan, Ilocos Sur, on March 31, while radio announcer John Villanueva was killed in Legazpi City on the same day that radio announcer Juan Pala was wounded in an ambush in the Davao City last month.

Danny Estacio, CNPC president, called on all the members of the Quezon media community to join the indignation rally.

"Polly's death bonded the local journalists in grief. This is one opportunity for each member of the media profession to offer their hands in solidarity to protect our fast diminishing ranks due to these senseless killings," Estacio said.

Recent statistics show that 71 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. Of this, 41 deaths were job-related. *With an AFP report*

Chavit took more tobacco taxes, Erap lawyer charges

By Jerry Esplanada

THE LAWYER of jailed ex-President Joseph Estrada has accused former Ilocos Sur governor Luis "Chavit" Singson of funnelling more than P200 million in tobacco excise tax funds to his "ghost projects" and of having once again taken over illegal gambling operations in northern Luzon.

In an interview, Raymond Fortun also assailed the Macapagal administration for allegedly looking "the other way" where Singson was concerned.

Fortun alleged that President Macapagal-Arroyo "has been protecting those whom everyone knows are involved in illegal activities like Chavit Singson."

"Singson has become untouchable . . . *ang laki ng takot ng gobyerno kay* (the government is so scared of) Chavit," said Fortun, who came to the INQUIRER offices last Friday.

Singson, the star witness in the plunder trial of Estrada, dismissed Fortun's allegations, saying "everything's on record as far as the tobacco excise funds are concerned".

"And I don't engage in ghost projects. Definitely there's no truth to his claims," said Singson, who was interviewed by phone on Saturday shortly before he left for the United States.

Second time

This is the second time Singson was involved in a controversy concerning tobacco excise taxes. The first time was when he accused Estrada of funnelling P130 million in Ilocos Sur tobacco excise taxes through him to Charlie "Atong" Ong, an Estrada crony.

Singson said he knew what Fortun was up to. "Part of his job is to destroy me and my credibility as a witness," he said.

"They're afraid of the truth because obviously they are hiding something. They're probably panicking because they're thinking Erap's other secrets might be revealed in the soon-to-be-made movie about my life," Singson said.

Fortun alleged that the President had ordered sometime in March 2001 the release of P107 million in tobacco excise funds to Singson, followed by another P107 million in June the same year.

"The question is where did the money go? Because the information and the papers that we have will show that as soon as he received the money, (Singson) fanned out the funds to his ghost projects in Ilocos Sur," Fortun said.

He claimed the government knew of the funds misuse but has not ordered any investigation up to this time.

In the interview, Fortun also alleged that Singson's brother, Bonito, was running jueteng operations in northern Luzon.

He claimed that because Chavit and Bonito have patched up their differences, Chavit was also in on the operation.

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El Shaddai: Ping not a factor in Cha-cha decision

By Michael Lim Ubac

A SPOKESPERSON for the El Shaddai charismatic group has denied it was was opposed to Charter change because this would be detrimental to the presidential ambitions of opposition Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson.

El Shaddai spokesperson Mel Robles said the group has been consistent in its stand that any move to tinker with the county's fundamental law should be done after scheduled national elections.

"We have less than 360 days before the (2004) elections. If the people don't go to the polls, they might go somewhere else," said Robles, who was trying to explain the charismatic group's decision to oppose Charter change.

Asked if the group would support Lacson, who has declared his intention to run for president in 2004, he said: "Let's work together first. We have a lot of problems to attend to, so let's just support (the Macapagal) administration."

Unprecedented

In an unprecedented move, El Shaddai and the Iglesia Ni Cristo Christian sect issued a joint statement on May 8 condemning the largely House-driven campaign to amend the 1987 Constitution.

The move elicited mixed reactions from the government and the public because the religious doctrines of the two groups are diametrically opposed.

Both also count on the allegiance of several million members—El Shaddai claims to have seven million, while INC has about five million.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to contact INC spokesperson Bienvenido Santiago.

Explaining El Shaddai's reason for opposing Charter change, Robles said rewriting the Constitution at this point would always be interpreted as an attempt to advance the personal interests of incumbent officials.

He said the joint move of the politically influential religious groups to oppose constitutional amendments now should not be cause for alarm in the political arena.

He pointed out that the El Shaddai has been against Charter change since the term of President Ramos.

"We are consistent in this stand. We went to Luneta with Jaime Cardinal Sin and (former President Corazon) Aquino in 1997 (to oppose Cha-cha). This is not new to us," he said.

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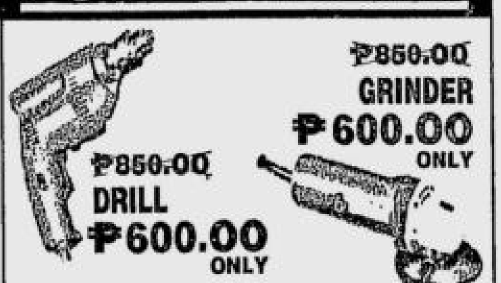

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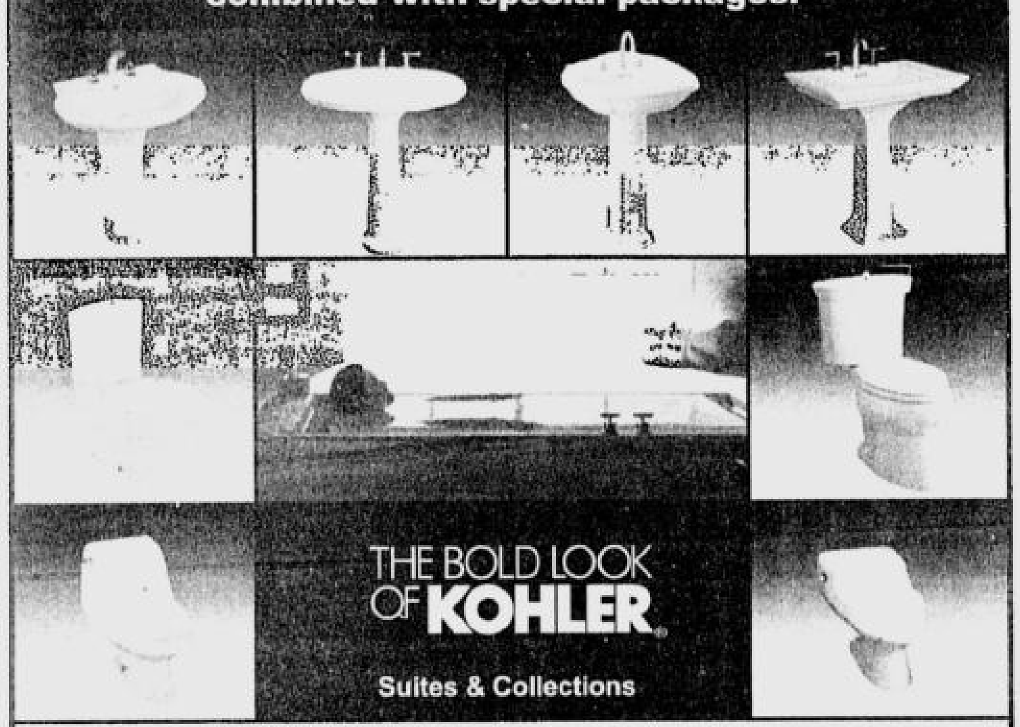

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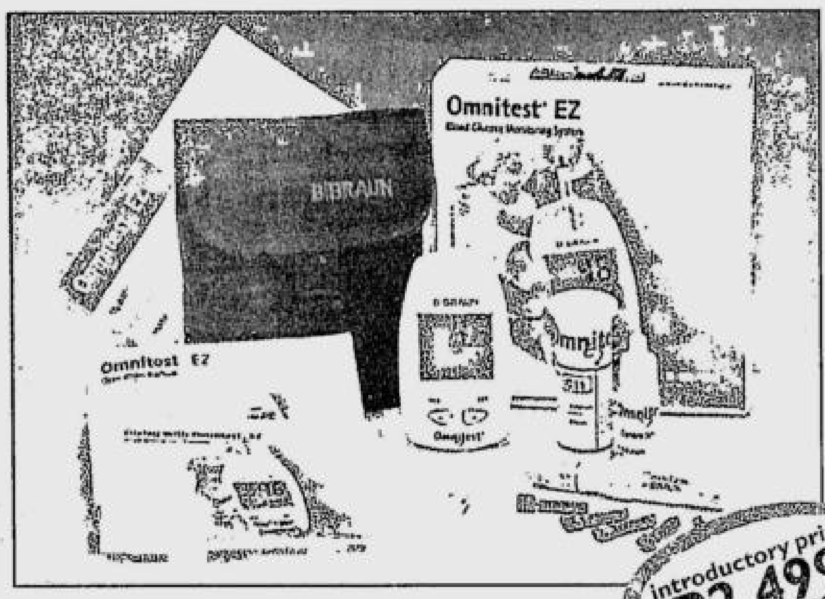

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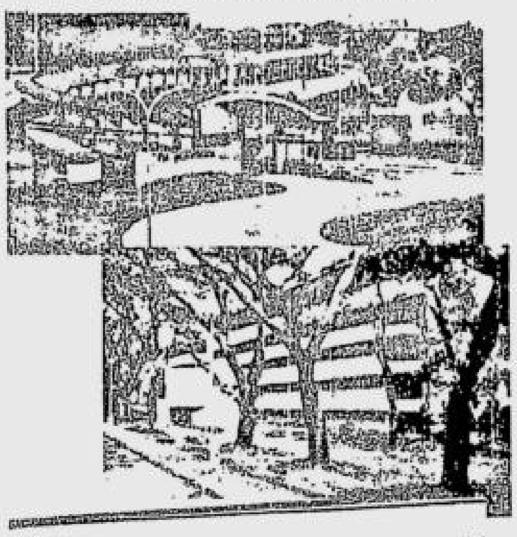

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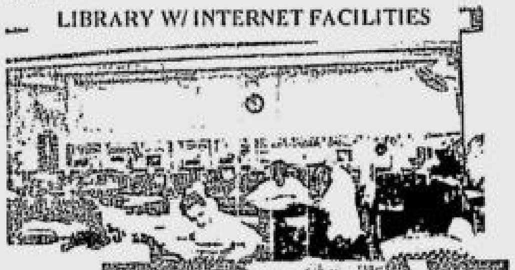

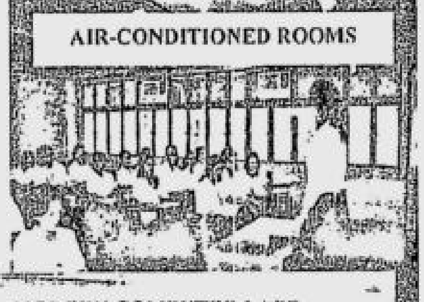

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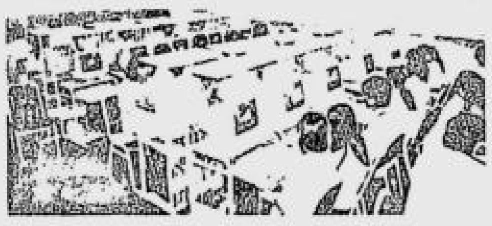

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Farmers urge Congress to rush anti-Bt corn bills

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

MILITANT farmers yesterday called on Congress to enact bills that would prevent the entry of genetically engineered crops like Bt corn into the country.

Rafael Mariano, chair of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, appealed to the members of the House to "immediately sit down, tackle and pass" three measures that are pending in the chamber, which would halt the commercialization—planting and sale—of Bt corn in the country.

"Instead of tackling anti-people issues like Charter change that would only intensify agrarian unrest in the countryside, Congress should pass immediately House Bill 3381 and discuss House Resolutions 238 and 922," Mariano said.

HB 3381, authored by Bayan Muna party-list representatives, seeks to suspend the entry, field-testing and propagation of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) pending a thorough evaluation of their safety and compliance with health and environment standards.

HR 238, also filed by Bayan Muna, seeks to probe the role of the National Committee on Biosafety of the Philippines in the field-testing of Bt corn.

HR 922 seeks to investigate the Bureau of Plant Industry for approving the commercial propagation of Bt corn under the Yieldgard label of Monsanto Corp. of the United States.

"While deliberations in Congress are ongoing, the distribution of Bt corn must be stopped," Mariano said.

Protected areas get funds to fight poachers

WORLD Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)-Philippines has created a legal fund to fight "environmental crimes," particularly those committed within priority conservation areas in Palawan, Mindoro and Batangas.

Jose Ma. Lorenzo Tan, WWF-Philippines president, said the Environmental Fund for Legal Action (EFLAC) was put up a few months after "one of the most outrageous crimes against nature [was] committed in Philippine waters."

Tan was referring to the apprehension in February 2002 of 117 Chinese nationals from Hainan, China, who were caught poaching in the Tubbataha Reef in Palawan.

Their fishing vessels reportedly yielded dolphins, sharks, giant clams, sea turtles, red fan coral, tanks of expensive live fish, along with detonating cords, blasting caps, cyanide and other chemical substances.

"Although multi-sectoral vigilance now allows us to arrest criminals like these, that is not enough," Tan said. "Arrests must lead to charges. Charges must lead to prosecution. Prosecution must be taken all the way to conviction."

Other priority protected areas in the country are the Apo Reef in Mindoro and Balayan Bay in Batangas.

A group of private scuba divers led by former Cabinet Secretary Jamby Madrigal filed charges last week against a Filipino-Chinese businessman and his companions for allegedly spear-fishing in Apo Reef. *Gerald G. Lacuarta*

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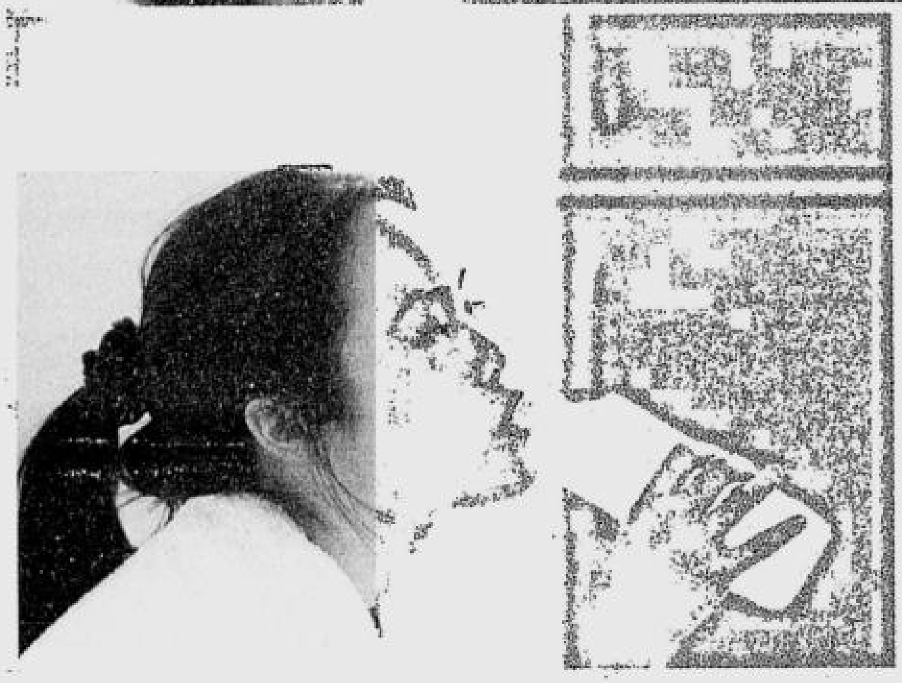

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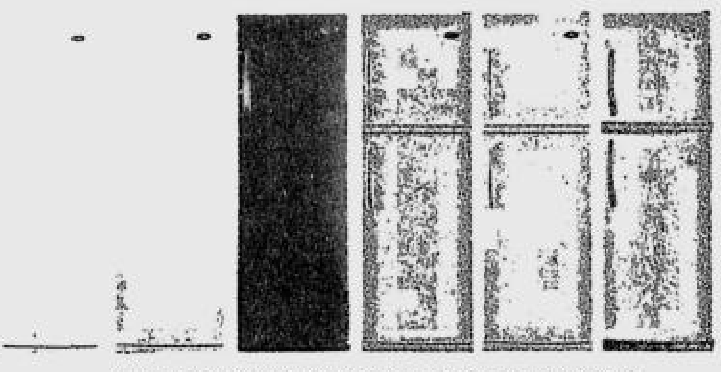

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Low-tech counting

EDITORIAL

QUESTION: How many people does it take to cast one vote in the Philippines? Now that MegaPacific has won the bid to supply the Commission on Elections with some 2,700 counting machines, the answer, apparently, is seven. One Filipino and six Koreans, who are needed to fix the MegaPacific machine.

Despite failing three Comelec-conducted tests in so-called harsh conditions—failures which required the intervention of six technicians from the Korean supplier SK—the MegaPacific machine still managed to meet the commission's approval. Last month, the election agency awarded the controversial contract to supply automated machines for counting and canvassing to the MegaPacific consortium, in time for the 2004 elections.

By doing so, the Comelec has effectively made a liar of the President.

Last Dec. 30, in her dramatic decision to forgo a run for Malacañang in May 2004, President Macapagal-Arroyo launched a three-point reform program, including the total computerization of the election process. On Jan. 20, on the second anniversary of the Edsa II people power action that ousted Joseph Estrada and installed her in Malacañang, the President took that reform program one step further by allotting real money for the long-delayed computerization. "I am hereby announcing the availability of P2.5 billion to fully computerize the quick and accurate counting and tabulation of votes in the 2004 elections," she said. "High-tech voting, this is the key to reform."

Less than a week after that Edsa II speech, the Comelec rose to the occasion, approving en banc the resolution to acquire the needed counting machines.

But apparently what the Comelec approves in principle is different from what it approves in practice.

The Comelec, in its own Request for Proposals, laid down the following as a requirement: "The counting machines should have been used in at least one political exercise with no less than twenty million voters."

And also: "... the Goods offered have been in production for five ... years."

Just in case anyone missed the point, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos declared: "There will be no experimentation."

But the MegaPacific machine, which failed three tests and needed special technical attention, turned out to be a prototype. In other words, it did not meet any of the three requirements.

But if the Comelec under Abalos—incorrigibly a politician, unlike his diffident, ultimately ineffective predecessor, Alfredo Benipayo—treats its own pronouncements lightly, we should not be surprised that it takes the law less than seriously.

Republic Act 8436, which mandates the use of an automated election system, requires that the necessary device must be a "stand alone machine which can count votes."

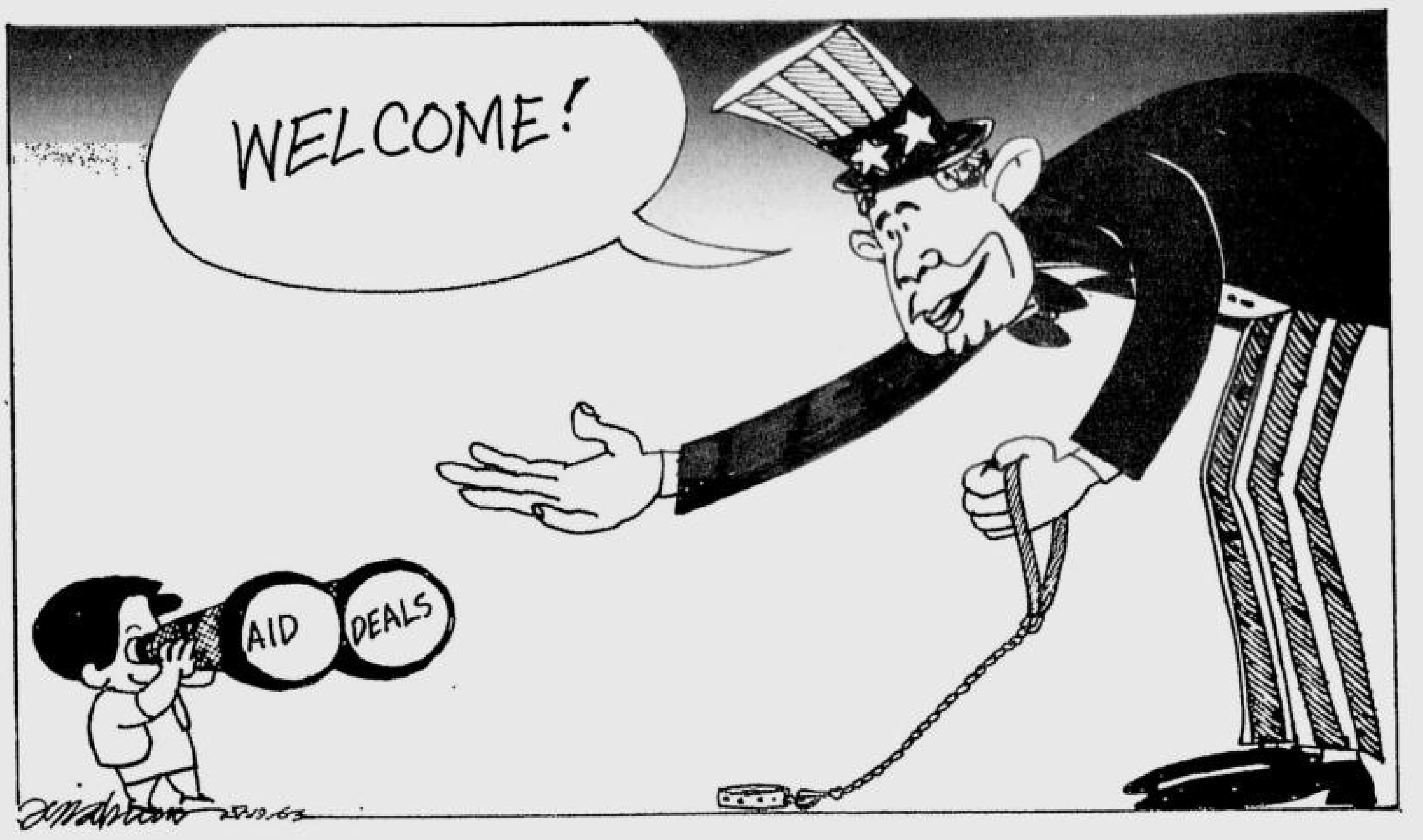
The MegaPacific machine, however, requires a connection to a personal computer. As anyone with a cursory knowledge of computers can readily see, this connection creates a potential for electoral fraud.

But even IT experts find the whole affair sordid.

Immediately after the Comelec awarded the contract to MegaPacific, representatives of the country's IT community denounced both the bidding and the award, calling it grievously flawed. These experts represented the same organizations tasked under RA 8436 to serve in an "advisory council" that will help guide the Comelec in the massive computerization project. This advisory council was not consulted in the evaluation of bids, Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines president Corazon Akol said. The experts called on the Comelec to declare the award of contract "null and void."

The response from the Comelec was categorical: It announced that the first batch of counting machines, about 30 in all, will arrive in July.

The issue of the counting machines is not the only one bedeviling the Comelec, which has not yet recovered from the failed attempt to impeach the controversial Election Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco. But if the worst fears of the country's IT community prove true, it will be the issue that will cause the President's hoped-for legacy in high-tech reform to crash. Not even all the Koreans in the world can fix that.



Slow court trials encourage kidnappers

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

HERE'S bad news for people who want to get rich and for status-seekers who want to appear rich even when they're not: According to the Philippine National Police, kidnap-for-ransom gangs choose as their victims those whom they think are rich and therefore can easily afford the ransom. It is therefore risky to pretend to be rich when you are not.

Teresita Ang-See of the Citizens' Action Against Crime (CAAC) related the case of a man who kept parading expensive vehicles (Benzs, BMWs, Pajeros, etc.) in his hometown to impress his townmates, including a girl he was courting. Actually, he was just borrowing the vehicles from a car exchange, pretending that he was going to sell them to potential buyers. He succeeded in fooling his townmates with his tall tales. Unfortunately, he was too successful. Kidnappers believed him, too. So they kidnapped his son. The ransom was a modest P100,000 but he could not raise even that. Not even P50,000. So the kidnappers killed the boy.

Another case was the family who boasted that it owned a row of apartments being rented out. Actually, it was just renting one unit. But kidnappers believed the bragging and so kidnapped a member of the family. Needless to say, the status-seeking family couldn't pay the ransom and the kidnap victim was killed. The moral: Don't brag; don't pretend to be bigger than what you really are.

But what if you are really rich? Then don't flaunt it. Don't follow Imelda Marcos' advice that "if you've got it, flaunt it." It's even better if you pretend to be poor. The Biblical admonition that "blessed are the poor, for they shall inherit the earth" speaks the truth in more ways than one.

I once ran a story in Weekend Magazine of the Daily Express of a vegetable farmer in Rizal who wore slippers and old clothes with holes in them and always carried an old *bayong*. Nobody would have guessed, but he was actually a millionaire. The ratty *bayong* he was carrying was filled with money collected from vegetable vendors in the markets. He paid income tax on his millions, too.

He showed me his small farm near the boundary of Cainta and Taytay. It was sandwiched between two big factories. Both factories wanted to buy his land so they could expand, but the farmer wouldn't sell. He was earning more from his vegetables than from what they would pay him for the land.

Moral: Don't look down on people in shabby clothes. They may be richer than you. Yet they're safer from kidnappers than poor people who pretend to be rich.

There are many persons like that. In fact, it is a common joke when a friend shows up in coat and tie and he is greeted with "*Bihis na bihis ka, ah*," he replies, "*Wala akong pera, eh*. I have to hide the fact that I have no money."

These are the people who are kidnapped and are killed because they can't pay the ransom.

PNP Chief Hermogenes Ebdane said during a briefing for journalists at the Pacer (Police Anti-Crime and Emergency Response) office last Saturday, that about 80 percent of those victims who were released paid ransom. Paying, however, is no guarantee of release. In two cases, although ransom was paid, the kidnappers wanted more. According to Pacer statistics, from Jan. 1 to May 14 this year, there were 29 kidnappings in the Philippines, one less than the 30 recorded during the same period last year. Of the 42 kidnap victims, 28 were released from captivity (presumably after paying ransom), seven were rescued, two escaped, one was killed, and three are still being held captive. One of the victims, a Japanese, is still missing. There are reports that he was killed but his corpse has not yet been recovered.

Two of the kidnap victims are Japanese, one is Chinese, three are Chinoys, while the rest are all Filipinos.

The statistics debunk the common impression that Mindanao is the kidnap capital of the Philippines. It is Luzon. Of the 29 kidnappings, Luzon had 23 (18 of them in Metro Manila), Mindanao five and Visayas only one.

Eleven of the 29 cases have been solved, a 38-percent crime solution rate. Of the remaining cases, three are considered "live," meaning the victims are still being held by the kidnappers.

Of the kidnappers, 26 suspects have been arrested while 14 identified suspects are still at large. Criminal charges have already been filed in court against the arrested and identified suspects.

That is not the end of the affair, however. The accused still have to be convicted and punished. The CAAC's Ang-See complained that trials are very slow. She said that some cases are now more than nine years old. And that the families of kidnap victims spend more in legal expenses during the trial than they would have paid in ransom. Fiscals and special prosecutors from the Department of Justice are supposed to prosecute the cases, but victims often have to hire private prosecutors because the government lawyers can't attend to their cases. Accused kidnappers often have four lawyers each for every prosecutor. The defense lawyers use all the tricks available to them to delay the cases, Ang-See said, and some judges are too lenient to them.

Meanwhile, while the trials move slowly, some of the accused manage to escape. The fight is so uneven, Ang-See complained. The kidnappers have all the money to hire expensive lawyers, bribe guards and policemen to be able to escape and perhaps even some judges to be acquitted.

Ang-See named a notorious kidnapper who has been convicted of kidnapping but who is still free as a bird. He had been caught red-handed three times in hijacking incidents, but none of the cases was ever filed.

Ebdane, however, allayed fears of the CAAC of a "rising tide of kidnapping." Except for the Waray gang, the kidnap syndicates have been neutralized, he said. He asked for the public's cooperation in solving the three remaining "live" kidnapping cases.

Three things

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

FIRST, the part about Roberto Verzola and his hunger strike.

I've known Obet from way back and can say with absolute certainty—something I do not normally say, absolute doubt being my journalistic policy—that you cannot find a more principled guy than he. I say this because of news reports and commentaries I've read and heard hinting that the hunger strike is well financed—this is a war presumably being waged by European agriculture against America's—and that Obet and company are being paid good money to go hungry. I say this because of reports and commentaries I've read and heard that Obet is cheating on his fast, nobody can last that long without eating.

Well, if anyone can, it is Obet. He is the best argument for his cause. I caught him in a talk show on TV last week and was astonished to find that although he had been sufficiently weakened by his hunger strike to be confined to a wheelchair, he was as lucid and sharp as ever. He has never been one to eat much, living a pretty spartan—some would say, ascetic—lifestyle. His diet consists of rice and vegetables. It is safe to assume those vegetables do not include Bt corn.

He was one of those who developed the first computer in this country as a student at the Philippine Science High School in the '60s. He was one of those who pioneered e-mail use in this country putting up a service that catered exclusively to NGOs. Though he can easily run the R and D of any multinational company—and he has not lacked for offers there—he devotes his time to civil society and its causes instead. He rides jeepneys and walks where there are none. That is where he draws his strength, from the discipline of his body and the nourishment of his soul.

He was one of the board members of an NGO I put up years ago. Though we disagreed on issues and policies a number of times, he always put his case clearly and well. To this day, I have yet to hear him raise his voice in any discussion. When someone like that talks, you listen.

If a hunger strike seems an unreasonable way to talk, it is only because government has stuffed its ears with wax which needs prying loose. The only reason the Department of Agriculture is talking now is because of the hunger strike. The only reason media have taken notice of Bt corn is because of the hunger strike. The only reason the public has heard of genetically modified organisms, or GMO—which, contrary to rumor, is not the husband of GMA, though a case could always be made for it, they're both genetically modified—is because of the hunger strike.

This is not to say of course that someone with Obet's scale of integrity is always right. That precisely is the reason for talking. Which brings me to the second point, which is GMOs.

I agree that we do not lack for safer alternatives to GMOs to meet the food requirements of this country. I agree that we may not embrace technological solutions to social problems, or rush to adopt apparent agricultural miracles only to justify an unjust social structure where a few hoard the national wealth and the many go hungry. If the problem is the specter of hunger, the solution is not Bt corn, it is redistributing wealth. There is something cynical about the search for scientific breakthroughs to feed the world when the world can be easily fed simply by using, according to UN estimates, a tenth of the money the United States currently spends for arms. There is something cynical about our own attempts to boldly—others will say, recklessly—promote things like Bt corn when a tenth of the military budget should go a long way toward miraculously multiplying this country's loaves and fishes.

But having said this, I must say as well that I am assailed by what seems to me to be an anti-technology, or anti-science, attitude of some of those advocating causes such as this. There is nothing genetically modified about the human desire to improve on nature. It is part of human nature. I grant that can be dangerous in excessive form, such as the form it took during the pit of Rationalism when people talked of "putting Nature on a rack to make her yield her secrets," which has succeeded truly in tormenting nature whose groans we can hear in the kind of cataclysms we are experiencing today. But just as dangerous is the other extreme, which reposes blind faith in the superiority of the natural. Which I've seen in NGOs too, particularly in New Age-ish preference for "natural alternatives" to antibiotics, or indeed to a complete distrust of the medical profession.

I have no problems with GMOs as a general rule, unless it can be proven that a particular GMO produces more harm than good. My sympathies have always been with Frankenstein and not with the village folk who ran him out of his castle presumably for violating the canons of God and man.

And finally, Bt corn. Obet and company have been trying to prove, armed with the findings of a slew of scientists, that Bt corn produces more harm than good. I know Obet and I say, declare a moratorium on Bt corn, let us sit down and talk like reasonable people. I do not buy the Department of Agriculture's explanation that the findings Obet is presenting are old hat. I've heard that before when the Freedom from Debt Coalition was trying to get Cory to repudiate the fraudulent debts: The Department of Finance kept saying its arguments were old hat. Well, old hats when never worn remain new. Or for those who do not like figures of speech, old arguments that have not been refuted remain valid.

I do not buy even more that idea that the United States has been using Monsanto's products for years, including Bt corn, and so far they have produced no ill effects. I have ironclad proof they have produced the most baneful effect of all: much of America supports a madman named George W. Bush.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@info.com

Blurred lines

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

FOR GENERATIONS of moviegoers the film "Casablanca," starring Ingrid Bergman and Humphrey Bogart, evokes the ultimate in romance, friendship, intrigue and betrayal amid the World War II setting of that former North African French colony. Today Casablanca is the scene of deadly suicide bombings that killed and wounded scores of people. Analysts have drawn a pattern to the recent bombings in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, attributing both to "international terrorism," except that the Casablanca bombings underscore a new development: while the targets were places frequented by foreigners, most of the casualties were local inhabitants.

For those who have been closely monitoring the terrorism front even before 9/11, these recent bombings are quite confusing as the lines are blurring. It should be noted that Riyadh and Casablanca are situated in Muslim countries whose citizens are now getting hurt themselves, because of the terrorism ascribed in the past as handiwork of Arabic citizens. The al-Qaida is being eyed in Riyadh and yet, in the Sept. 11 attacks, 15 of the 19 terrorists involved were Saudis.

* * *

A recent news analysis in the Herald Tribune by Neil MacFarquhar pointed out that the Riyadh bombings drove home one stark truth: that the Saudi Arabian ruling family, which had since 9/11 refused to confront the reality of terrorism in its kingdom, is now rudely forced to do so (the United States has castigated it for inaction on US warnings about possible attacks on those foreigners' compounds). MacFarquhar opined that the bombings serve as a wake-up call not only for the Arabic leadership that has "routinely rejected" reports painting the kingdom's security in an unfavorable light," but for Arab society as well. He called the Riyadh bombings a "harsh example of what happens when extremism in any form is allowed to run unchecked" and quotes a London-based Arabic daily as opining that "The real problem is the Saudi society itself. They don't want to ask real questions about why their society is producing such people."

* * *

Here President Macapagal-Arroyo issued orders to the armed forces just before she flew out to the United States to conduct "selective aerial and artillery attacks" against "embedded terrorist cells" in Mindanao. Though she did not name the groups, it was readily concluded she was referring to the MILF. It was clear that GMA wants to send US President Bush the unequivocal signal that she is unerringly on his side in the anti-terrorism campaign.

At his recent dialogue with INQUIRER editors and columnists, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes was quick to stress the government's resoluteness in dealing with local terrorist groups in Mindanao. "No self-respecting sovereign nation will tolerate terrorist activities against it," he said, even as he also stressed that it can never be "total war" or military action alone with the dissidents; it has to be a "total approach."

* * *

Reyes, said that among the benefits that the MILF would derive from meeting the government's June 1 deadline is a $100-million fund (P5 billion) from abroad, to be used for a wholistic development of the Muslim areas of Mindanao, including the old MILF camps. The fund, which will be given out in tranches of $30 million and $70 million, is an incredible amount of money; if only the MILF would cooperate with the government it should go a long way toward developing those Muslim areas which are undeniably among the most backward.

* * *

As a firm believer in education as a long-term solution to poverty, I lauded the setting up two years ago of Kalayaan College (KC) at Riverbanks in Marikina as a "new alternative to a UP education." KC is a private college founded and directed by UP professors led by former UP president Dr. Jose V. Abueva, in the belief that there should be an alternative for students who can't get into UP largely because of its limited quota. Starting with 70 students in its first year, KC doubled its enrollment last year and expects to have 250 students this June. Happily KC opened another campus in Abucay, Bataan last academic year with 100 students, to help fill the dearth of quality educational institutions in that part of the country, and hopes to double the enrollment in June.

* * *

I asked Abueva to sum up KC's first two years and he expressed confidence that it's carrying out its founders' vision of high quality-instruction through its selective recruitment of lecturers from UP, as well as the UP tradition of academic freedom. He pointed out that while KC is offering its students "enrichment through the humanities and the arts," it is also deeply involved in research on social policy, governance and constitutional reform toward a federal-parliamentary republic." He also stressed that being a small college, KC's "caring teachers" are able to provide the students with a "congenial, personalized and nurturing environment" and that they are "consciously adding a spiritual and ethical dimension to learning." Kudos to Kalayaan.

* * *

My painter-niece based in the United Kingdom, Ivee Olivares-Mellor, daughter of my brother Luis Olivares Jr. and the former Rosario Magsaysay Barretto of Zambales, has returned after an absence of eight years to put up her first solo exhibit last Saturday at the Drawing Room in MetroStar Bldg., Makati City. The show, which runs until June 4, was opened by British Ambassador Paul Dimond and presidential legal adviser Avelino Cruz Jr. (a third honor guest, the painter's aunt and idol, Anita Magsaysay Ho, was indisposed). Ivee, who studied painting and sculpture in one of the most prestigious art colleges in the United Kingdom, the Chelsea College of Art and Design in London, presented impressionistic landscapes from the English countryside around Chichester, West Sussex, where she lives with her lawyer-husband Ian, as well as from her memories of the Zambales scenery.

Seize the moment

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Carlos Isagani T. Zarate

THAT news item (PDI, 5/13/03) on the exclusion of Sultan Kudarat Gov. Pakung Mangudadatu from a closed-door meeting between President Macapagal-Arroyo and local officials in Koronadal is troubling. Mangudadatu was refused entry by members of the Presidential Security Guard despite his insistence that he is a governor and the concurrent chair of the Regional Peace and Order Council in Central Mindanao. He was however told that his name was not on the list of Central Mindanao officials who were to meet with the President.

Embarrassed, the governor had no choice but to leave dejected, saying, "Maybe they don't trust me because I am a Muslim...I want to attend the briefing because I want to help solve the problem (on terrorism)."

By shutting out a known Muslim leader who is the president of the Muslim National Leaders Association, the Macapagal administration may well have slammed the doors on engaging in talks not only with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front but also even with respected Muslim officials. It brings no comfort that this came amid disturbing events in Mindanao these past two weeks starting with the MILF attacks in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte and Maigo, Lanao del Norte, the Koronadal bombing and the virtual collapse of the peace talks between the GRP and the MILF following the government's cancellation of the May 9 exploratory talks in Malaysia.

The rebuff of Mangudadatu may be interpreted by some sectors as riding on the wave of anti-Moro sentiment clamoring for quick military solutions to the conflict in Mindanao. This intolerant view is apparently shared not only by the now hawkish Macapagal administration but also by others outside of the government who, rightly or not, have gotten impatient over the seemingly unending peace process with the Moro Front.

In fact, in coffee-shop talk here, there were suggestions, made in jest though, to let loose the dreaded Manero brothers to resume their anti-Moro campaign that brought them notoriety. Just like in the '70s, anti-Moro vigilantes are now being reportedly organized by local executives in some areas in Central Mindanao and armed by the military.

In the midst of these, a statement coming from Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte warning of a "civil war" that will inevitably erupt in Mindanao is not consoling. Duterte, who is the Macapagal administration's consultant on peace and order, claims that "the level of animosity is nearing that line of being in the state of Rubicon." What is worrisome is that statements such as these from government officials may only sow confusion, or worse, further create a wedge in a multi-ethnic populace.

Are the options of the people in Mindanao at present really limited to waging an "all-out war"? Are the people in Mindanao resigned to the fact that the island's historical problems can only be resolved on the battlefield and not on the negotiating table? I do not think so. And, so do the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines and the countless peace advocates in Mindanao who remain unfazed despite the staccato of rhetoric played by the hawks, both inside and outside of the government. In fact, last week two successive conferences held in Davao City and Cagayan de Oro City by various peace and civil society groups both highlighted and called on the government and the MILF for an immediate resumption of the peace talks. But it is unfortunate that this symphony of peace seems to fall on deaf ears. Last May 5, the CBCP Council, through Cotabato Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, made an impassioned plea to both President Macapagal and MILF Chair Salamat Hashim to stop the fighting, declare a ceasefire and resume the peace talks.

In response to that call, the MILF replied in a letter dated May 9 and signed by one Mohamad Nur, chief of staff of Hashim, indicating the Moro Front's openness to a possible ceasefire and resumption of talks. Part of the MILF letter reads: "Is ceasefire still possible at this time and may the peace process still continue at the negotiating table? We answer yes because we remain truly committed to a sincere and principled peace talk. But for as long as the oppressors in government and military are not giving us the chance to live our normal lives, for as long as we remain on the run and are kept away from our families, we can not anymore say how this common wish of peace-loving members of humanity may truly happen."

With the MILF's response, Archbishop Quevedo expressed hope that the government and the MILF will "seize the moment." While President Macapagal is yet to respond to the CBCP letter, Archbishop Quevedo in the meantime poses the following challenges: "So how can the desire of both parties and the desire of civilians caught in the crossfire be realized? What initiatives can both the MILF and the government do? Can President Macapagal-Arroyo and Chairman Salamat Hashim contact each other at least through personal emissaries discreetly and informally and sound each other out? Can they come to a meeting of minds on the minimum requirements of a ceasefire and the resumption of the peace talks without becoming inflexible, doctrinaire and dogmatic? ... It is uncommon wisdom to seize the moment and do so."

Will these challenges be heeded? We hope they will be. The answer now falls squarely on the laps of both the government and the MILF. Otherwise, there will be no end to this cycle of war, violence and bloodshed that has sadly attended the history of Mindanao and its people.

* * *

Comments at karlos_z23@hotmail.com and kar_laws@yahoo.com

Repent, ye super-spreaders of pseudoscience

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

ZERO, the womb of ciphers and truth, was invented at least 2,000 years ago in 3 BC—by the Sumerians of ancient Babylon—who left evidence of profound numeracy in radiocarbon-dated cuneiform. Such history pleases Mohammed ibn Musa "al-Khowarizmi," the 9th century Arab mathematician and teacher of "algorithms" and arithmetic during the golden age of Baghdad's Caliph, Mamun the Wise. His classic, "Hisab 'al-Jabr' Wal-Mugabalah," gave "algebra" to posterity.

Al-Khowarizmi stands with Euclid—the inventor of geometry; with Galileo Galilei—founder of cosmology; and Charles Darwin—explorer of evolution even before X-ray spectroscopy and biochemistry showed how fitness for survival flows down the river of time and genetic molecules out of Eden. They stand with Hippocrates the healer, and Florence Nightingale, whose medicine is a compound of hard science and the fearless compassion of honest Homo sapiens—such as the brave Filipino doctors, nurses and builders of the coalition's humanitarian super power. (Supper is served for them in the memory of significant others in Washington, D.C. on Monday night, because our allies know we are under terrorist attack, and so are they. Good. As Gitche Manito the Mighty said to H. W. Longfellow, "All our strength is in our union, all our danger is in discord!")

I invoke these powerful totems in a time of pestilence, to honor the professions that save us from mass extinction and false intelligence. I want to put a hex on the super-spreaders of pseudoscience who endlessly employ the political sciences of mob rule and obsessive-compulsive protest to push dead ideologies and needless causes.

Hunger-strikers at the Department of Agriculture, masquerading as environmentalists, have added pity-mongering tactics of melodramatic victimhood to fear-mongering by innuendo and falsehood. They want to force a moratorium on genetically modified crops like Bt corn despite a long, careful process of safety and regulation already in place. Agriculture Secretary Cito Lorenzo has listened patiently, but stood firmly on the ground of due process and the rule of law and order. Good for him. But where in the world is Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun on this issue? She cannot remain neutral because her old comrades who refuse to grow up are involved. It's not an issue of botany or food safety. It's an issue of governance and saving the hunger-strikers from themselves, and vulnerable society from sophisticated them. Others should speak up against such immoral pressure tactics as tag-team hunger striking.

Religious folks, (running or not) who think GMOs are the new thalidomide, should do penance for mental sloth by reading 2,000 times the Jubilee Year 2000 declaration of the Vatican Pontifical Academy of Sciences where the Vatican and Pope John Paul II blessed GMOs like Bt corn with a "prudent YES!"—after years of scientific and ethical study. Read the Holy Father's words in "Science and the Future of Mankind," the official Catholic Church document the hunger strikers are hiding from everyone but which you can download at www.deanjorgebocobo.blogspot.com or send e-mail to deanjbocobo@yahoo.com. You will support GMOs as a weapon against world hunger, like the Pope, and molecular biology as our defense against the mental virus-spreaders.

They publish comic books of scary fairy tales that proclaim a principle of infinite caution based on paranoia and ire. This is deeply anti-science in method and spirit. It shall not pass unchallenged. They would call Prometheus an arsonist. I would call them strange or ill. The ego-rush of unrelenting, undeserved, biased daily coverage by their powerful, misguided allies in media, brimming with viral propaganda and op-eds ranting weird eck-eck on biotech, might only egg the brittle on to lemming suicide, during withdrawal.

Theirs, is really a moot and silly issue. The Public Issues Education Project of Cornell University reports that "more than 60 percent of food products on US shelves may contain at least a small quantity of some crop that has been genetically engineered." (The same surely applies to our *sari-sari* stores and supermarkets.) In 2002, 74 percent of the US soy bean crop was GMO—for oil, flour, lecithin, *toyo* and *taho*. GMO corn was 32 percent in 2002—for corn starch, canned corn, corn syrup, corn flour, corn dogs, pop corn and mais con hielo. Canola was 60 percent GMO—for "cooking oils, dressings, margarines, cheese, non-dairy products, chips, fried foods, cookies, pastries, chocolates, confections, cosmetics, soaps and detergents." The US cotton crop in 2002 was 71 percent GMO. Only hunger-strikers will eat their shirts and their words, but "cottonseed oil may be present in a variety of products, including oils, salad dressing, peanut butter, chips, crackers, cookies and pastry crusts."

Over 50 such crops are now deregulated and commercially available in North America and dozens of countries that grow and trade them. The Wall Street Journal predicts the European parliament will lift its moratorium on GMOs in the July session, noting it's on the agenda with EU-sponsored studies showing safety, economy and environmental friendliness in eliminating pesticides and herbicides, reducing over-all cost and boosting yields. When Europe joins the genetic green revolution, and Euro-Left funding evaporates, our green revolutionaries may learn the true meaning of hunger and zero. But don't let them boycott the "unsafe" SARS vaccine, and hunger-strike in Guangdong.

Straight news, please

THERE are some newspaper practices that, at first glance, look okay but on second look are questionable.

For starters, there is this practice of quoting the comments of anonymous persons in news reports on significant events or controversial issues. The news usually starts with a straight narration of facts. Then somewhere in the middle or near the end of the story, the opinion of an unidentified person appears.

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

Statements of this nature are brought into the picture through phrases like "observers have noted," "critics think" and "informed sources however believed." No specific names are given. Just a general description of the source of the comments.

For example, a news report announced the plan of the Metro Manila Development Authority to limit the number of public buses that can ply Edsa during certain hours of the day. After giving details of the proposal, the story went on to say that some traffic experts doubted whether the restriction will significantly reduce the volume of traffic in that area. The news was silent on the credentials of the quoted experts or how they arrived at their conclusion.

An English teacher from Quezon City feels uncomfortable about this reporting style. She considers it a subtle way of "editorializing" the news, that is, injecting opinion in what is supposed to be straight news. She asked: "Can't your reporters simply write the "who, what, when, how and why" of the news they are reporting without adding the opinion of some unknowns?"

Face value

Her question reminded me of the reaction of an environment-conscious reader to an earlier report of the INQUIRER on the decision of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza to cut the trees at Arroceros Park to give way to the construction of dormitory facilities for Manila teachers. The news carried the opinion of an "environmental development expert who requested anonymity" that supported Atienza's claim that the construction will have minimal adverse effect on the trees.

The reader asked "how can we be sure the opinion quoted in your news really came from an expert on the environment and not from the prolific pen of your reporter? Who is that expert and what criteria did he or she use to say that the plan of Mayor Atienza will not harm the trees at Arroceros?"

I too am wary about undocumented comments in news reports. In the absence of a name behind it, the readers do not know whether or not the source of the opinion is competent to give it. In effect, the readers are being asked to take the quote at its face value and consider it as coming from a credible source. Something like, you should believe it because I said it.

Unless the subject of the news involved is of paramount national interest, I do not think the opinion of unnamed sources deserves space in otherwise straight news. More so if the comments are derogatory. It's like shooting at somebody under the cover of darkness. The target of the attack does not know who his tormentor is or where to direct his return fire.

But if the affected party decides to file libel charges against the newspaper for the nasty comments, the reporter will be obliged to identify that unnamed person. Otherwise he may find himself facing the consequences of the questionable news report by his lonesome self.

Finally, I think if the faceless third party thinks he has something worth saying on an issue, fairness demands that he come out in the open and claim credit for the product of his intellectual work. How convenient it is to give disparaging statements without being held liable for their consequences.

Last word

Also raising the hackles of many readers is the way some news reports are being given the appearance of fairness and objectivity when, in truth, they favor one party. A journalistic sleight of hand of sorts.

To illustrate: The employees of a profitable company went on strike over the issue of wage adjustments. The news on the work stoppage carried the statements of labor and management. Their arguments and counter-arguments were equally presented. Fair, so far. Then the story ended with a statement from the union spokesman criticizing one of the owners of the company for his lack of concern for the welfare of the workers.

The company cried "foul" over the closing sentence of the news. It was bad enough that it was a low blow. Worse, it gave the union a chance to take a swipe at management without the latter getting the opportunity to refute it.

Obviously, the location of the statement in dispute did not happen by chance. It was placed there to give an extra PR boost to the union at the expense of the company. The "last word" on the subject of the news rounded up the readers' understanding of the labor dispute. The climactic quotation showed whose side the reporter was rooting for.

The rule book states that reporters should check in their political or social beliefs when they write their stories. Opinions are the domain of editorial writers and columnists. Unfortunately, it's not that easy to dissociate personal feelings from work. One way or the other, what a reporter thinks about the subject of his report shows in the draft he submits to his editor.

The alert editor will surely spot the flaw. But under pressure of deadline and other administrative responsibilities his level of vigilance sometimes is affected. And that's when I get complaints.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

Nobel Prize for Urbani

"I don't know if the Nobel Institute has a rule against making a posthumous award. If so, they'd better break it. The next Nobel Prize for Medicine surely belongs to Dr. Carlo Urbani."

—BBC broadcaster Alistair Cooke said of the Italian doctor who first recognized the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome

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A better way to spend P50-M bounty

THIS government must know better ways of spending P50 million. Instead of offering the amount as bounty for the heads of Salamat Hashim and other Moro Islamic Liberation Front leaders, it would be wiser to use the fund to extend assistance to the displaced civilians in Mindanao: the more than 300,000 evacuees displaced by the war the government itself initiated.

To date, at least 64,852 families or 329,308 persons have been affected by the ongoing conflict. Since their evacuation in February, each evacuee has received on the average P121.50 from the government or about P1.40 in daily allowance. The government assistance totaled to some P40 million.

While our government and the United States try to decide whether the MILF is a terrorist organization or not, the affected civilians have to bear all the discomforts and uncertainties of living in evacuation centers. It is our hope that the contending forces will sit at the negotiating table and take concrete steps to attain real peace in Mindanao.

No amount of bounty will bring peace to Mindanao. It is only through the process of negotiations that we can address the roots of this war and in turn give normalcy to the lives of our brothers and sisters in Mindanao.

—FLOREEN M. SIMON,
advocacy officer,
Citizen's Disaster Response
Center, 72-A Times St.,
West Triangle, Quezon City

No human rights under communism

THERE has been a lot of talk that the Philippines will make big bucks from the reconstruction of Iraq, with an expected 100,000 to 150,000 Filipino workers recruited by foreign construction companies to work.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Iraqis are a well-educated but impoverished people, with 60 percent of the population depending on the food-for-oil program of the United Nations in order to survive. Unlike the Saudis who believe it would be below their dignity to work in construction jobs, the Iraqis because of their poverty will be more than willing to work as common laborers. In fact, the Iraqis will surely revolt if jobs go to foreign workers and they remain jobless.

During the US-led war in Iraq, there were demonstrations here in Manila mainly by leftist (communist) groups, who claimed to sympathize with the Iraqi civilians injured or killed in the war. This was pure hypocrisy; they should instead have sympathized with the Filipino victims of their NPA comrades.

I cannot understand why the press continues to portray communist groups as human rights groups. This is ridiculous and contradictory. There is no such thing as human rights under the communists. People in communist countries do not enjoy human rights. They can be picked up by the police and tried by kangaroo courts and then sentenced to prison terms or even executed. The communist groups here are not preaching human rights, they are preaching sedition. The press should not allow itself to be used as a propaganda tool by the local communists.

—RICO XERES,
Eisenhower Street, Greenhills,
San Juan, Metro Manila

PBA being too harsh on Torion

I HAVE noticed that during the past few days, your Sports Section featured news about the indefinite suspension of Jimwell Torion from playing in the remaining Philippine Basketball Association season after he was found positive for drug use.

Initially, I was shocked to learn about Torion's suspension because I'm not only a PBA fan but also because I'm one of his childhood friends. I'm his *kababayan* and I've known him since we were kids. I felt pain upon knowing that Torion's case has not been handled fairly.

I cannot understand why the PBA is coming down hard on Torion when two Fil-Am players who were previously found to be positive for marijuana use were suspended for a short time. Why single out Torion?

I'm not saying that Torion should be spared, but I think the decision to withhold his salary and ban him for the rest of the season is too severe a punishment for someone who is not a drug addict.

If people think that depriving him and his family, especially his young children of their basic needs, will enable him to learn his lesson, that is too much. How can he learn his lesson, knowing that his family will go hungry for the rest of the year? Torion has experienced a lot of deprivation, and I think this kind of intervention will not be effective.

I hope the PBA and the Batang Red Bull management will reconsider their decision on Torion's case. Instead of punishing drug offenders, why not explore other means of intervention like treatment? Let us be reminded that life's lessons are not only learned through punishment but also through real acceptance and forgiveness.

—SR. BELEN O. ALBINA, OSR,
162 Sinciego St.,
F.B. Harrison Road,
Pasay City

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FOUNDATION FOR JUDICIAL EXCELLENCE

Stress testing now being done by Stradcom

WE write to give our side relative to the allegations that appeared in the write-up of Vicente B. Foz in the Motoring section last May 1, entitled, "How best to bust faking of vehicle insurance cover."

In the last last paragraph, he wrote: "The LTO and the Insurance Commission appear unable to make up their collective mind. But they should focus on the ultimate objective of the entire exercise: to eliminate fake insurance certificates."

The reality of the situation is that the Land Transportation Office issued a memorandum last Feb. 14, 2003 for Stradcom, an alternative IT provider, to conduct stress testing on authentication of certificates of cover (COC) issued by insurance companies due to the reports coming from regional offices that the existing authentication provider, SQL Wizard and D-Tech, could not meet the parameters set by the LTO to eliminate fake insurance certificates. This decision of the LTO was strongly opposed by ISAP, which said it violated the memorandum of agreement. The insurance commissioner in a letter dated March 31, 2003, also requested the LTO to suspend the stress testing until all matters are cleared. The LTO therefore had no alternative but to suspend the memorandum in the meantime.

However, a new development surfaced with the letter dated April 24, 2003 from the Philippine General Insurers Association Inc., another association of insurance companies, requesting the LTO to allow the stress testing conducted by Stradcom to continue parallel with the ISAP system for at least one month to enable PGIA members to determine which of the two systems was better.

On this basis, the LTO issued a memorandum allowing Stradcom to conduct stress testing for the authentication of COC-CTPL starting May 5.

I hope we have clarified the apparent misconception that the LTO has been indecisive.

—ROBERTO T. LASTIMOSO,
assistant secretary,
Department of Transportation
and Communications,
Land Transportation Office,
East Avenue, Quezon City

Legislation by diktat

AT THE LAST public hearing conducted by the House committee on health, the sponsors of House Bill 4110 pushed for a hastily discussed, yet very important bill, "An Act for Reproductive Care Structures and Appropriating Funds Therefor," by declaring all public hearings terminated. They then announced that they would deliberate upon the proposed legislation in a closed-door executive session.

This was a very clear effort on the part of some members of the committee to ignore pro-life and pro-family groups' offer of papers and railroad the passage of the bill.

The issues raised against HB 4110 have aroused the anguish of Catholics, Protestants, Muslims and some other denominations. Why the haste to end the public hearings? Are they afraid because the papers and documents submitted talk about the truth and more truths will come out if hearings are continued? These issues that tend to rip Filipino families apart must have to be clarified and discussed as thoroughly as possible.

The committee chair should not have yielded to his colleagues who want to pass the bill without being rigorously examined. The pro-choice and anti-life proponents are bent on perpetuating the hoax that reproductive health care, reproductive services and reproductive rights exclude abortion. Yet, the United Nations, ICPD+5 and Unicef have admitted and even given new definitions to these terms, clearly defining the terms to include abortion. We should be given the chance to ascertain the truth by the presentation of credible and authentic documents.

—CITA BORROMEO-GARCIA,
St. Therese Compound, Manlunas Street,
Villamor Airbase, Pasay City

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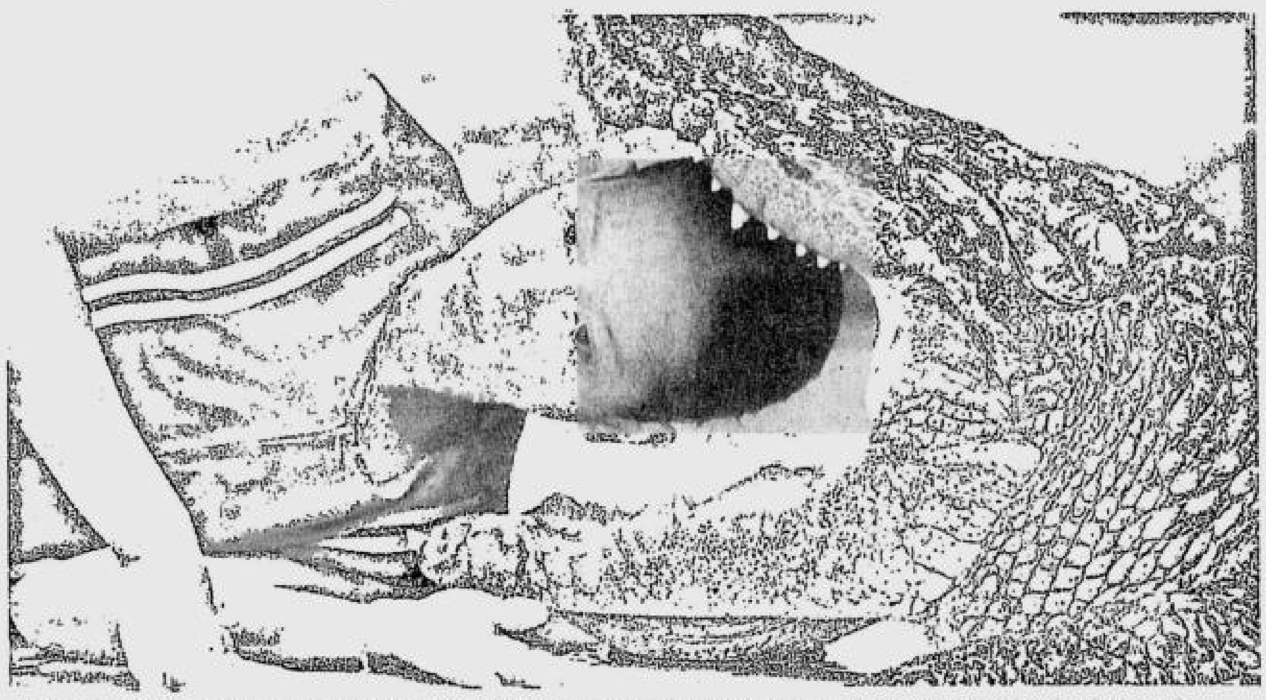
The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**



A THAI performer puts her head inside the mouth of a crocodile during a show for tourists in Chonburi, east of Bangkok. The SARS outbreak has discouraged tourists from coming to Thailand and other parts of Asia. AFP

SARS EPIDEMIC

Taiwan crisis worsens

TAIPEI—The SARS crisis accelerated on Sunday in Taiwan where health officials have reported record rises in new cases for two days in a row even as Singapore geared up to declare its crisis over and the World Health Organization said the majority of the world's outbreaks of the respiratory disease are coming to an end.

Taiwan reported five new deaths and 36 new cases of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, its biggest one-day jump yet in infections while the country's new health minister sought to ease Japan's outrage at finding out that a Taiwanese doctor infected with SARS had traveled to Japan earlier this month.

SARS claimed four more lives in Hong Kong and two more in China. SARS has killed 634 people worldwide and infected more than 7,800, most of them in Asia, since it first emerged in southern China in November.

Epidemiologists from 16 SARS-hit places, meeting in Geneva, agreed that most of the world's outbreaks are coming under control although difficult struggles remain, especially in mainland China, which has seen the bulk of the world's cases, said WHO's coordinator of SARS efforts Mike Ryan.

"The message coming out of this meeting is certainly one of great hope. It's one of celebration that the measures are working, but also a call to action because we've got a lot more to do yet before we end this problem," Ryan said in a conference call with reporters.

Despite encouraging trends elsewhere, Taiwan's problem keeps getting worse. The island's 34 new cases Saturday and 36 new cases Sunday have been the biggest increases yet. SARS has killed 41 people out of a total of 344 infections in Taiwan, where the previous health minister resigned Friday to take responsibility for the spiraling crisis. About 30 percent of SARS patients are medical workers, officials said.

The new health minister, Chen Chien-jen, said Sunday that he believed the Taiwanese doctor from Taipei who vacationed in Japan earlier this month did not know he was infected when he traveled.

The 26-year-old doctor, from Mackay Memorial Hospital, sought treatment for fever after he returned to Taiwan last Tuesday and was tested positive of SARS on Saturday. *AP*

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Bush: More forgiving of some critics

WASHINGTON—The Bush administration is mending fences with some allies opposed to the Iraq war, but the reconciliation process is far from evenhanded.

"Punish France, ignore Germany and forgive Russia," the president's national security adviser is widely quoted as telling associates.

Analysts say Condoleezza Rice's sentiment summarizes the administration's stance—especially if you add that pro-war countries such as Poland, Spain and Bulgaria are to be richly rewarded.

Tensions will be high when President George W. Bush and the leaders of Russia, France, Germany, Japan, Britain, Italy and Canada meet early next month at an economic summit in Evian, France.

It is unlikely they will find much common ground, other than agreeing to redouble efforts to combat international terrorism following last week's bombings in Saudi Arabia.

Deep divisions remain over rebuilding Iraq and the future role and relevance of basic institutions such as the United Nations and Nato. Bush will also use the trip to reward coalition partners.

Even before a White House announcement, President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland disclosed that Bush planned to visit the Polish city of Krakow on May 30.

Poland was among Washington's strongest war supporters and is preparing to take command of one of Iraq's three postwar zones. The United States and Britain would control the others.

In addition to Poland, Bush will make other thank-you stops, perhaps including a friendly Persian Gulf nation such as Qatar or Kuwait.

The healing process seems to be working best with Russia, despite differences over the war and Moscow's aid to Iran's nuclear program. Bush needs Russian President Vladimir Putin's help in combating terrorism and weapons proliferation. He also hopes Moscow will play a role, along with China, in defusing the North Korean nuclear standoff.

Bush will visit Putin in the Russian's hometown of St. Petersburg en route to the economic summit, and will participate in that city's 300th anniversary celebration. Bush and Putin spoke by phone on Friday morning.

"Of course, we have had a lot of argument recently concerning the Iraq problem, but we have successfully overcome those differences," Putin told reporters last week during a visit by Secretary of State Colin Powell.

In another sign of thawing US-Russia relations, Russia's Duma last week ratified a landmark nuclear-disarmament agreement with the Washington that cuts arsenals by two-thirds. The US Senate ratified the pact in March. *AFP*

ANTI-APARTHEID HERO AP

Tens of thousands of dancing and singing South Africans jammed a soccer stadium for the state funeral of Walter Sisulu, the "heroically humble" giant of the fight against apartheid. "The African colossus that lies in front of us might have fallen, but he has not died," said President Thabo Mbeki, who said Sisulu's memory would live forever. Since his death May 5 at the age of 90, Sisulu, who spent decades in apartheid prisons, has been hailed as a man of great integrity, the moral center of the African National Congress' liberation struggle.

Foreigners keep off Saudi streets

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia—Fearful of new bombings, foreigners kept off the streets in this western Saudi Arabian city, and the kingdom's ruler vowed that terrorists would not be tolerated.

Saudi Arabia "will never allow any faction of deviated terrorists to harm the country and undermine the safety of its citizens and residents," King Fahd said Saturday in his first public comments on the Riyadh attacks that killed 34 people, including eight Americans, Monday.

US officials had warned of possible strikes in Jeddah and a coordinated effort by Saudi-born Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida terrorist network to strike lightly defended targets worldwide. Within hours of the warning, terrorists struck in Morocco.

Foreigners in Jeddah kept away from crowded areas. "We don't go anymore because there is concern and we are being cautious," said Nino Roselund, a 31-year-old assistant food and beverage manager from Denmark. "I'm not scared, but I'm not stupid either. I don't want to take a chance."

Businessmen also said they were worried the Riyadh attacks would change the way companies do business in the kingdom. "Of course we are worried and we are very concerned, especially from a business point of view. Saudis are very good to do business with, but they will have to get rid of this terrorism," said Swiss businessman Henry Gugsell, 54.

Gugsell represents a Swiss textile finishing company that has supplied traditional Arab headdresses for the Saudi market for 30 years. Many royal family members are clients.

King Fahd linked the attacks to government efforts to institute reform in the conservative kingdom. Muslim extremists believe America is imposing attempts at social reform following the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. Fifteen of the 19 hijackers involved in those attacks came from Saudi Arabia. *AP*

2 Italians, 2 Poles made saints

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul celebrated his 83rd birthday on Sunday carrying out one of his favorite tasks—creating new saints as role models for members of the Roman Catholic Church.

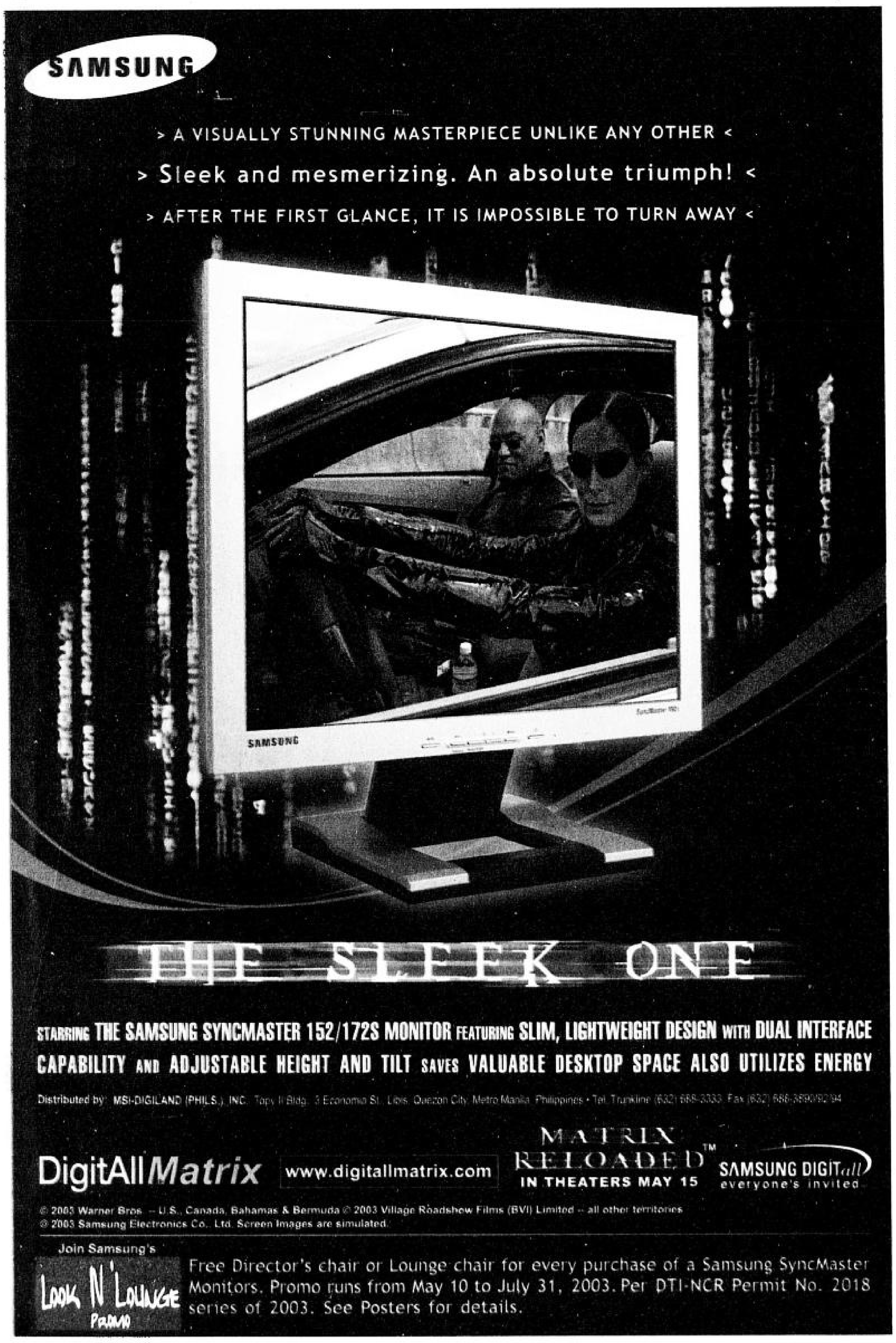
Before thousands of faithful in St. Peters Square, the white-haired Pontiff elevated two fellow Poles and two Italians—all founders of religious orders—to sainthood.

The four new saints were Virginia Centurione Bracelli, a 17th century Italian noblewoman who took care of the poor; Maria de Mattias, a 19th century Italian nun who set up schools for the rural poor; Jozef Sebastian Pelczar, a Polish bishop born in 1842 who promoted social work; Urszula Ledochowska, a Polish nun who founded schools and a religious order.

Clad in yellow robes, the Pope seemed in good spirits and spoke with a clear voice as he addressed the huge crowd spread out under bright summer sunshine. It was a marked contrast to his last birthday when he was so weak he could read out only a few lines of his speech before handing it over to an aide to complete the task.

At that time the Vatican was awash with speculation that John Paul might retire. But that talk faded in recent months as the Pope's frail health showed signs of improvement.

Vatican watchers believe he may be taking new drugs to tackle the Parkinson's disease that has ravaged his body and slurred his speech. They say he has also benefited from a rigorous new regime of physical and speech therapy. *Reuters*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WORLDBRIEFS

6 jailed for stopping anti-SARS work

BEIJING—Six people in northern China have been sentenced to prison for inciting riots and using violence to stop anti-SARS work, state newspapers reported Sunday, part of a government campaign to force compliance with disease-control restrictions. The six demonstrators in Hebei province were given prison sentences ranging from one year to five years for disrupting social order and hampering SARS prevention work during an April 25 protest, the China Youth Daily said. The group instigated a riot involving several hundred villagers in Guzhuangtou after one of the hotels in town was designated as a SARS observation station, the newspaper said. *AP*

Israel barrier to keep out bombers

QAFFIN, West Bank—Beyond coils of razor wire and a deep trench, a welder sends blue sparks from a blow torch as he works on a barrier that one day will be more than three times as long as the Berlin Wall. Israel hopes the fence and orders to shoot anyone who tries to cross will keep out suicide bombers. Palestinians say the wall, which frequently weaves into the West Bank, is a way of annexing land while delaying a peace deal that would set borders of a Palestinian state. In the end, the government plans to completely cut Israel off from the West Bank with a fence 600 km long—although no one can say how long it will take. Only about 32 km are finished, and an additional 160 km are partly built. *AP*

Reservists in antiterror unit

SYDNEY—The Australian government unveiled plans on Sunday to use Army reservists as a new counterterrorism unit to guard key infrastructure and provide security at major events. Volunteers for the new unit, to be known as the Reserve Response Force (RRF), are expected to begin training in a fortnight and the units are likely to be fully operational by October. Defense Minister Robert Hill said that as part of Australia's national response to terrorist threats, reservists could play a greater and far more significant role than they did now. *AFP*

'Malaysia safe from terrorists'

KUALA LUMPUR—The government will hold a security briefing for all foreign ambassadors in Malaysia to assure them the country is safe after the United States renewed warnings about possible terror attacks in Southeast Asia, a senior official said Sunday. Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the briefing was necessary because some foreign governments "have the perception that since our country is an Islamic country, we are considered unsafe." "We will explain the real situation so this will not get out of hand," Abdullah was quoted as saying by the national news agency, Bernama. "The ambassadors should submit regular reports to their capitals to inform them Malaysia is peaceful and there is nothing we would hide." *AP*

Smut back in Baghdad

BAGHDAD—A couple of dozen men allow their impatience to be heard as they queue to get into a Baghdad cinema and settle down before the big screen, despite threats from Shiite clerics to burn down houses showing "indecent" films. Abu Mariam, the manager, is having none of it from the religious majority flexing its muscle in post-Saddam Iraq. "All the films we show have received the green light from the old culture ministry," he says, showing the stamp on the posters of action films. However, stuck next to Arnold Schwarzenegger are photos of scantily-clad women in suggestive poses, bearing no ministry stamp. *Reuters*

Aceh braces for war amid talks

ACEH, Indonesia—While the government and rebels held last-minute talks in Japan to save a faltering truce in Aceh, thousands of troops in the province Sunday were poised to launch a military operation if the discussions fail. Armored vehicles rumbled through the streets of this provincial capital, while soldiers took up positions at key junctions and corners in the city. Many people choose to stay at home and wait for word on the talks, which Jakarta said will fail unless the rebels agree to drop their independence demand, accept autonomy and begin immediate disarmament. The Tokyo meeting is seen as the final chance to avoid a return to open hostilities in of one of Asia's longest running wars, which has killed at least 12,000 people since in 1976. *AP*

Revival of Sri Lanka talks sought

COLOMBO, Sri Lanka—Norway's Deputy Foreign Minister Vidar Helgesen held talks with Sri Lankan government officials on Sunday as part of efforts to revive the island's stalled peace process, a Norwegian spokesperson said. Top government negotiators, G.L. Peiris and Milinda Morogoda, attended the meeting in the capital, Colombo, said Tomas Strangland, a spokesperson for the Norwegian Embassy. *Reuters*

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Danding undecided on 2004 polls

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr., *PDI Visayas Bureau*

ILOILO CITY—Despite receiving endorsements to run for president in 2004, business tycoon Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco is not rushing to gun for the country's highest post.

"It would be a big personal sacrifice," Cojuangco told reporters on Friday at the Police Regional Office headquarters in Camp Martin Delgado.

The former ambassador and Tarlac Rep. Gilberto Teodoro Jr. were the guests during the graduation ceremonies of 114 policemen who finished a 120-day course on urban counter-terrorism.

"I am still thinking about it because I'd like to study it further," said Cojuangco.

He added he also wanted to "validate" the endorsement from the people.

Opposition legislators headed by Sen. Edgardo Angara wanted the business tycoon to be the candidate for president of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP) citing his record as a successful entrepreneur.

Angara had said that Cojuangco would be supported by 50 percent of the ruling party Lakas. He said the tycoon "is the only person now in a position strong enough to attract various political parties to his banner."

But the endorsement has reportedly created a rift in the LDP with some members supporting Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson for the presidency.

Cojuangco said he was unaware of any rift in the opposition party caused by choices for candidate for the presidency.

Cojuangco, chair and chief executive officer of food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., said he personally does not "need the job," referring to the presidency.

If it were not for the endorsements, he said the decision of whether to run for president or not "would be easy."

Cojuangco, criticized as a crony of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, said he would consider running for president if "I can be sure that I could make the lives of every Filipino a better one."

"I don't want to appear that I turned my back on my people when they needed me," he added.

He said he will also consider in his decision his chances of winning.

Cojuangco ran for president in 1992 under the Nationalist People's Coalition, the party that he founded. He finished third.

Poachers steal mature giant clams in Bolinao

By Yolanda Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BOLINAO, Pangasinan—Conservation work for the giant clam at the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute (UPMSI) here suffered a setback with the poaching of 27 mature clams at the institute's ocean nursery near Silaqui Island.

Dr. Suzanne Mingoa-Licuanan, project leader of the giant clam (*Tridacna gigas*) project, said illegal fishermen stole the clams' meat and left the shells behind.

She said she was not sure if the poachers also took whole clams because the UPMSI staff was still conducting an inventory of the stocks.

All the affected clams aged 7-13 years were already of mature and reproductive size.

The clams produced at the UPMSI are used for research and restocking in efforts to conserve the endangered marine resource.

Most of the shells exhibited breakage at the shell margins. Several shells were also separated from their original groupings, Licuanan pointed out.

In a report to Mayor Jesus Celeste, Licuanan said islanders interviewed by them showed that spearfishers from other island barangays were fishing within the sites where fish is plentiful.

"We have observed that giant clam ocean nurseries tend to attract fish, and later become nursery grounds for different species of edible fish. Sad to say, the culprits who poached the clams did not realize this important contribution of giant clams to the marine environment," she added.

GIANT clams like this that are cultured at the Marine Science Institute in Bolinao, Pangasinan have been poached. PDI PHOTO

₱200M for schools to be built in Negros

DUMAGUETE CITY—More than P200 million worth of school buildings and classrooms will be built in Negros Oriental this year under the World Bank-funded Third Elementary Education Program (TEEP) and the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDIP).

Gov. George Arnaiz said the World Bank would set aside some P150 million for the TEEP and around P60 million for the SEDIP.

But the provincial government was required to put up P30 million in counterpart funds for both programs so that the projects will push through.

Under the TEEP, the province will have to shell out a 10-percent counterpart or P15 million, while in SEDIP the required counterpart is 25 percent or P15 million.

Noting the need for more classrooms in the province, Arnaiz said the provincial government has decided to borrow money to be able to put up the counterpart funds.

Arnaiz said he would negotiate with a government bank that would give the province a 10-year period to pay the loan.

Romy Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau

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NPA pressed on ban on land mines

MATI, Davao Oriental—An international humanitarian group said the communist-led New People's Army (NPA) would be difficult to convince to commit to the worldwide ban on the use of anti-personnel land mines.

"The NPA is a tougher nut to crack. One reason given is for the defense of their mass based communities, but the ends do not justify the means. They might as well use weapons of mass destruction for defense," said lawyer Soliman Santos Jr., Geneva Call's director for Asia.

Geneva Call is an international humanitarian group that calls for all rebel movements and armed groups worldwide to commit to a total ban on land mines.

Santos cited an official statement of the NPA which labeled the worldwide move to ban the use of anti-personnel land mines as "impossible" to happen.

But still, Santos said, they would continue to convince the rebel group to stop using anti-personnel land mines.

By Geneva Call's definition, anti-personnel land mine "effectively explodes by the presence, proximity or contact of a person." It is dubbed a weapon that is "contrary to humanitarian conduct of war."

Last year, Geneva Call succeeded in convincing the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and the Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade, a breakaway group of the NPA, by signing the "Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines."

In 1997, a convention was held for the prohibition of the use, stockpile, production and transfer of anti-personnel land mines. But the convention known as the Mine Ban Treaty covers only states and not the so-called "non-state actors" which are the armed opposition groups challenging existing states.

The NPA also cited their being a "non-state actor" for refusing to join a worldwide ban.

"Land mines used in NPA ambushes are improvised, command-detonated land mines. They are not covered by the prohibition against anti-personnel mines," the NPA said in a statement. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NPAs disown killing of village chief

JONES, Isabela—The New People's Army has disowned reports that its members killed a village chair in Barangay San Vicente here on Thursday.

In a statement, Ka Victor Servidores, spokesperson of the NPA's Fortunato Camus Command, which operates in Cagayan Valley, said his group did not kill Juancho Soriano, 43, chair of Barangay San Vicente.

Earlier, a press statement supposedly signed by Ka Delio Baladon of the NPA's Benito Tesorio Front claimed responsibility for the murder of Soriano, a known supporter of losing congressional candidate, Dr. Asuncion Abaya, in the May 12 special elections here.

Servidores said Soriano was never tried by the NPA's "kangaroo" court. He instead implicated Isabela Gov. Faustino Dy Jr. and Army soldiers in the province in the killing, but he did not cite any proof.

Dy dismissed the accusations, saying he had nothing against Soriano, whom he described as a "trusted supporter" of his father Faustino Sr. and the family's longtime ally.

Dy said he even assured Soriano that he would release funds for the latter's federation of indigenous groups here when he visited the governor early this month.

"We are in a democratic country so I see nothing wrong with him (Soriano) supporting the other candidate so (I should not be linked) to his murder," Dy said.

"*Walang masamang tinapay sa amin* (We treat everyone as our friends). I cannot do that to a man who served my father. I feel very sorry (that this happened) and I condemn the killing. The killers should be arrested soon and made to pay for their sins," the governor added.

According to reports, Soriano was instrumental in giving Abaya, wife of the late Isabela Rep. Antonio Abaya, a big margin over her opponent, lawyer Giorgidi Aggabao, in his village in the elections. Aggabao, an ally of Dy, eventually won.

Earlier, a press statement said to have come from the NPA's Benito Tesorio Front was delivered to reporters in the province. Baladon's signature and the NPA's logo, however, were different from the signatures and logos that appeared in the rebel group's previous releases.

The statement claimed that Soriano was killed for being a military supporter and for supposedly providing information that led to the capture of two NPA leaders in April.

Officials of the dzNC Bombo Radyo-Cauayan claimed that their office received the Benito Tesorio Front's statement through a soldier of the 5th Infantry Division based in Gamu town.

But Col. Gominto Pirino, 5th ID assistant chief of staff for civil-military operations, denied the reports.

"That is a lie. Why should we muddle the case? It is a police case and our role is to support the Philippine National Police through intelligence information. We are not here to mislead them or anyone else," Pirino said.

He also dismissed reports that soldiers were involved in the murder.

Police said the seven men, who wore bonnets and armed with M-16 amd M-14 rifles and handguns, shot Soriano in front of his wife in their house in Barangay San Vicente. *Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK
Fishermen end a day out in the open sea, carrying their nets for safe keeping, on the shores of Barangay Binugao in Davao City's Toril District.

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Nuns mark 150 years of mission

VICTORIA, Laguna—An Italy-based congregation of the Daughters of Virgin Mary Immaculate (DVMI), whose apostolate centers on glorifying God "by serving the poor," is having a yearlong celebration of its 150th founding anniversary.

Already 21 years in the Philippines, with 28 Filipino nuns, the congregation serves the Church by assisting the old and sick, educating the children and the youth, visiting homes of the poor and assisting in parochial works.

Italian Superior Sr. Ma. Benigna Lano said their community has established centers in Alabang, Muntinlupa City; San Pedro, Laguna and this town.

She said the congregation started on March 1 its celebration of the 150th year of the life of the DVMI as "servant of God and the Church" in the country and all over the world.

The congregation was founded by the late Italian priest Fr. Francesco Piccone and Italian Mother Teresa Vallerga on March 1, 1854 in Savona, Italy.

"We cannot erase the past like the chalk on the blackboard. No, it is rather that life is written in history with love and sacrifice. Therefore, it touches our hearts and inspires us to see all our endeavors in the light of faith under the providential guidance of the will of God," Lano said.

She added that the deeds of their founders were a treasure for the congregation today.

"They answered the call of God with generosity, love and joy. They made Christ as the center of their lives and Mary, the example of total surrender to God," the superior said. *Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Tacloban policemen discover tunnel haven of rebels

By Vicente S. Labro and Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—A tunnel believed to be a lair of members of the New People's Army (NPA) in the city was over run by police authorities last week.

Supt. Arnulfo Cruz, city police chief, said no one was inside the tunnel when policemen conducted the raid in Sitio Picas, about 3 km from barangay proper of San Roque, 12 km north from the city.

Cruz said the tunnel had a bunker, a conference and a comfort room, and a kitchen. Its entrance measures 4 meters by 8 m with a height of about 3 m. It has a floor area of 100 sq.m.

It was built with clay with hardwood materials and sandbags as its support.

Seized during the raid were rebel documents and books, an NPA flag, sound system of a computer unit, assorted firearms, a solar panel and some military and school uniforms.

Mayor Alfredo "Bejo" Romualdez Sr. said he was "surprised" to learn about the existence of an NPA camp in the city.

"I didn't know that there was such a thing in the city. But I already made the necessary instructions to Cruz on this matter," Romualdez said, without elaborating.

Cruz said the tunnel confirmed that the rebels were already in the city. "But this is a big setback to the group. We were able to destroy their mass base in the city," he said.

He said police intelligence agents had been conducting surveillance operation in the area since January.

"We just waited for the right time," Cruz said when asked why it took them almost five months before conducting their operations.

Human rights groups were demanding the release of a farmer whom the police asked to escort them to the location of the tunnel only to be arrested later.

Cesar Versoza, 43, of Sitio Picas, was charged with illegal possession of firearms after policemen found in his possession a homemade .38 cal. revolver.

Versoza, a farmer and member of the human rights group Kadamay, was also suspected of being an active member of the NPA.

"I am not an NPA member. I really don't know why they arrested me," he said in the vernacular. He maintained that he did not own the gun allegedly taken from him.

He also denied any knowledge about the existence of the tunnel, located a few meters away from his house in Picas.

Resurection Abaloyan, staff of Sagupa, demanded Versoza's release, saying the farmer was arrested without any warrant.

Venus Capones of the Alliance for the Advancement of People's Right-Eastern Visayas, said their group was planning to file complaints of illegal search and warrantless arrest against Cruz and those involved in the arrest of Versoza.

But Cruz said there was no need to secure a warrant to arrest Versoza. "He was caught with a firearm in his possession."

Aeta folk face 3 problems needing urgent action

By Leo Celdran
Contributor

(*First of Two Parts*)

COMMENTARY

THE GRAVEST problem faced by Aeta folk today concerns their ancestral domain and their birthright to inherited lands.

It is their fervent wish that the government fast track the processing and awarding of their Certificates of Ancestral Domain Title (CADT) as inviolable proof of land ownership to serve as deterrent against land grabbers and opportunists. This protection is expressly granted under Republic Act No. 8371 or the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997.

Labay Ku, the Aeta federation-cum-cooperative composed of 10 Aeta original and resettlement communities, submitted on May 22, 2002 all pertinent papers and documents to the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) regarding its application for ancestral land titles. Regretfully though, its petition may have fallen on deaf ears as the application has been pending for almost a year now without any subsequent action or notice from the NCIP.

It is hoped that the NCIP commissioners take time to examine their consciences and accord full respect to the indigenous peoples who continue to suffer injustice each passing day that they sit and do nothing with their petitions. Calling newly-appointed chair, Reuben Lingating, for your swift action on this matter.

Lack of education is the Aeta folk's second most urgent concern. Although a public school teaching pre-school children already exists in two of the Aeta communities, namely, Tarucan and Maruglo, the Aeta are still clamoring for more schools to be established in the other areas.

Great leveler

The Aeta themselves have realized that education is the great leveler, the only means by which they can uplift their status and condition in life. Without it, they can never experience empowerment since they will remain ignorant and unlettered.

Aeta folk want the present pre-schools upgraded to include Grades 1-2 in order to give their children lasting opportunity to continue learning higher skills and to open education to as many Aeta as possible. This urgent plea is not only reasonable but also perfectly just if we are to witness the full development of the Aeta communities.

We anticipate the quick response of Secretary Edilberto de Jesus of the Department of Education regarding this matter. And to those who have the resources to provide books, reading materials, school supplies and other school paraphernalia as well as precious time to teach our less fortunate brethren, now is the time to be known and counted. Your donations are absolutely welcome.

Livelihood fund

The third most pressing issue hounding the Aetas is the unavailability of livelihood due to the lack of financial resources required to fund potential agricultural projects. Despite the setback experienced by the Aetas involving an earlier coffee project, the Sisters of the Holy Spirit refused to give up and continued to scrounge for funds for the Aeta's livelihood projects.

Just recently, the Mother Josefa Development Foundation Inc. extended a P500,000 loan to Labay Ku at a concessional interest rate of 2 percent per year, payable in three years. As suggested by the Aeta themselves, the money was used for an extensive taro cultivation program ("Pagtatanim ng Gabi") that will benefit eight Aeta communities. This is Labay Ku's first integrated livelihood project.

Each Aeta organization received P62,500 for distribution to cooperative members who wish to apply for a crop loan. The loan could be used to buy gabi seedlings, or for operating expenses including but not limited to the purchase of a carabao, farm implements, and production-related expenses such as weeding and plowing.

Planting commenced on March and harvest is expected after six months. The federation will purchase all the Aeta's gabi produce and return to them their net earnings after deducting their loan repayments.

A 10-person management team runs Labay Ku. It is composed of eight Aeta leaders, each representing his or her particular people's organization within the federation, and two non-Aeta civic-religious volunteers, Sr. Malou Santos and Luis Arueza.

The Aeta leaders (six women and two men) are all literate and were chosen based on their qualifications and competence. A formal meeting of the management team is conducted every two weeks where all issues concerning policies, programs and procedures pertaining to the cooperative's activities are discussed. It also serves as a forum for threshing out the Aeta's concerns as well as a mechanism for monitoring the progress of the livelihood projects so far implemented.

THE author is a graduating Master in Management student at the Asian Institute of Management. He chose the Convent of the Holy Spirit's Aeta Missions as his Leadership Walkabout Project, the final hurdle for completing the program. This is his way of making his own humble contribution to building communities, to uplifting people's lives. He can be contacted at mmlcc@mail.aim.edu.ph

GMA hails 2 farmers

DAVAO CITY—They have no doctoral degrees in agriculture, but their farming practice made them successful.

Darwin Tenasas, 27, a farmer from Tugbok District here, and Filemon Santander, 43, a swine raiser in Mandug, Buhangin District, earned the admiration of government officials and their peers not just because of their success but also for their willingness to share the technologies that set them apart from the others.

No less than President Macapagal-Arroyo showed them recently how grateful the government was for their help in improving the productivity of farmers in their communities.

Tenasas and Santander were named "Magsasaka Siyentista" for Southern Mindanao, which earned them presidential medals.

Roger Chio, regional agriculture director, said the awarding of the medals was part of the Department of Agriculture's program to encourage farmers to use technologies aimed at making them successful and impart these technologies to their peers.

Tenasas has been successful in converting his farm for rice production, livestock raising and fish farming. In the same land, he has also been growing other crops. Santander was the first in his community to use biogas for cooking and other purposes. The fuel comes from his swine farm's wastes, composed mainly of manure. *Dennis Jay C. Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Recall Bt corn sale OK, GMA urged

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—An umbrella of farmers groups opposing the commercialization of the controversial modified Bt corn has warned of future health epidemics.

"If Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) is a huge worldwide problem now, we are afraid that in the future, widespread use and consumption of Bt crops and GMOs (genetically modified organisms) would trigger new health epidemics worldwide," said the Bohol Network for Farmers Rights (BNFR).

BNFR issued the warning in a statement supporting the hunger strike in Quezon City opposing the government's decision to approve the commercialization of Pioneer Hi-Bred's Bt corn.

BNFR said the toxin in Monsanto's Bt corn exhibits similar allergenic traits as the Bt toxin in Starlink corn.

This toxin "has been proven to be highly allergenic and has been banned for human consumption in the US," the statement added.

BNFR said there is evidence that the Monsanto Bt toxin can elicit antibody responses consistent with allergic reactions in humans.

"In other words, the spread of Bt corn and other GMOs endanger the whole supply system with unwarranted health risks," the farmers said.

BNFR called on President Macapagal-Arroyo and Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo to immediately withdraw the approval of the commercialization application of Pioneer Hi-Bred for its Bt corn (marketed as YieldGard) and issue a moratorium on all field testing and commercialization of Bt corn and GMOs in the country.

"We call on (the) government to adopt the precautionary principle with regard to GMOs and prevent their entry and spread into the country's environment and food systems," BNFR stressed.

The group also demanded mandatory labeling of all products containing GMO ingredients "to give consumers a real informed choice."

BNFR has requested the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) to pass a resolution calling on the government to issue a moratorium on field testing and commercialization of Bt corn and other GMOs in the country.

Vice Gov. Julius Caesar Herrera, SP presiding officer and agriculture committee chair, has agreed to meet with BNFR representatives tomorrow to discuss the latter's demands.

BNFR is also requesting the SP to declare Bohol GMO-free to prevent the entry and spread of hazardous GM crops in the island-province's agriculture production system.

"Instead, we ask the provincial government to strongly support sustainable agriculture and organic farming as a viable alternative to GMOs," the group added.

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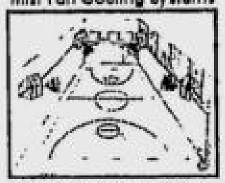

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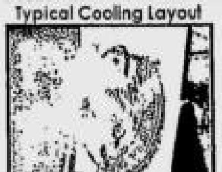

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Labor sheriff jailed for bribery

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Agents from the National Bureau of Investigation arrested a labor official here on Thursday after he received bribe from a local businessman.

Jonel Ebol, acting sheriff of the National Labor Relations Commission-Arbitration Branch 11, was detained at the cell of the NBI satellite office here while formal charges against him were being readied.

The NBI agents, led by NBI special investigator Dominic Cerro, launched an entrapment operation after businessman Jimmy Yap complained that Ebol had been demanding P30,000 in exchange for settling his dispute with his workers.

Around 6 p.m. on Thursday, Ebol went to Yap's house to get the P5,000 they agreed as partial payment.

Ebol counted the marked money and was already putting it inside his pocket when the five NBI agents came out and arrested him.

Yap told reporters that Ebol had been pestering him since 1999.

"He kept on pestering my life, visiting me at my house and even in the office just to ask for money. I lost my patience, so I asked help from the NBI," Yap said.

Ebol reportedly pledged to work out the reversal of the decision handed down by the NLRC regional arbiter based in Cotabato City involving a labor case between Yap and his workers.

In that decision, the NLRC ordered Yap to pay his workers.

"I already paid my workers. In fact, Ebol had seized four motorcycles from me as part of the payment. But he kept coming back and was asking me to pay P30,000," Yap said.

Yap also showed as evidence to the NBI operatives the text messages, which Ebol sent him. In the messages, the labor official was asking for the said amount.

Yap claimed he was not the only victim. Other victims just opted to remain silent.

Cerro told reporters they would file charges of direct bribery and violation of anti-graft and corrupt practices law against the captured suspect.

The NBI investigator has urged other victims of Ebol to come to the NBI office and execute sworn statements against the suspect.

In an interview with reporters, Ebol denied asking money from Yap.

He said he was just asking Yap to settle his P1,500 remaining obligation to the workers. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Mindanao bus firm threatens to close shop

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The management of one of Mindanao's oldest bus companies operating in the South Cotabato-Sultan Kudarat-Sarangani-General Santos City (Socsksargen) area has threatened to close shop after a deadlock with the company's employees union on the issue of salary increase.

Union members of the Yellow Bus Lines (YBL) insisted on a P108-daily wage hike to be implemented within three years, way above the management proposal of P25 a day.

The union has threatened to go on strike if the YBL management "(remains) insensitive" to their demand.

Romy Santiana, union president, earlier told reporters here that the P25-increase proposed by the management was not acceptable.

Unfazed by the workers' warning, the YBL management said it might as well shut down its operation if the employees insisted on their demand.

Gary Asumbra, YBL operations manager here, told reporters he was quite surprised by the workers threat to launch a strike.

Asumbra said the union and the YBL management had already agreed to extend the collective bargaining agreement. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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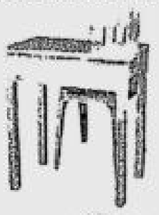

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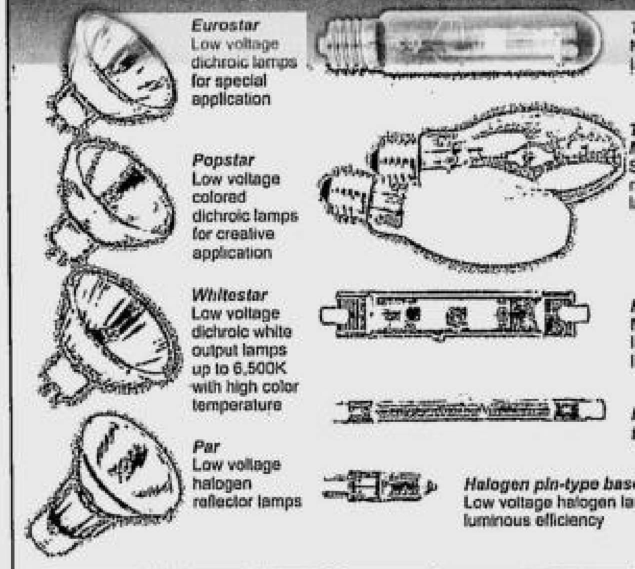

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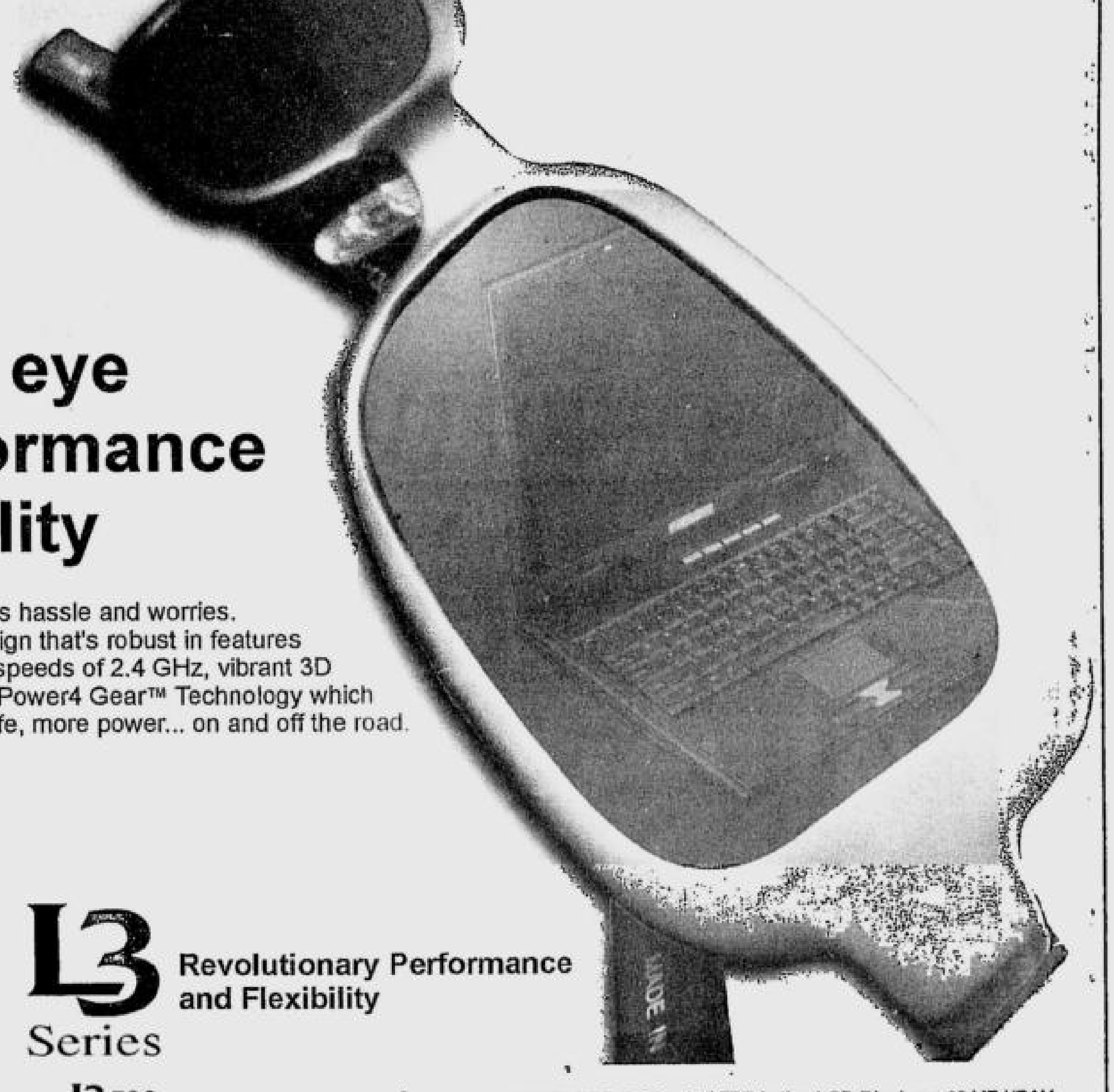

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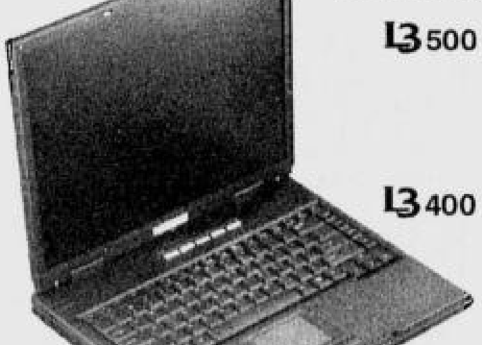

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LTO fines drivers who refused to take presidential daughter

CEBU CITY—It was the end of the road for two abusive taxi drivers who messed up with the wrong person—presidential daughter Evangelina "Luli" Arroyo.

The Land Transportation Office fined drivers Amador Bahian and Amado Villamor after Arroyo reported their refusal to bring her and her companions to a restaurant in Barangay Busay this city.

Arroyo sent an e-mail to Cebu City Traffic Operations and Management (Citom) chief Valeriano "Bobit" Avila to complain about the two drivers.

The presidential daughter told Avila that she was in Cebu City last May 1 and 2 to attend a workshop of high school administrators, members of the Foundation for Information Technology Education and Development Inc. (FIT-Ed) based in Makati City.

The group stayed at the Castle Peak Hotel in Barangay Mabolo.

At about 7 p.m. on May 1, Arroyo said she wanted to bring the participants to Mr. A's, a popular restaurant in the mountain barangay of Busay but the taxi drivers refused to take them there.

One of the drivers refused to transport her group while the other demanded payment of P150 instead of using his meter.

Arroyo said she paid only P70 to the driver who agreed to take her group to the restaurant.

The presidential daughter said the first taxi driver, Bahian, drove a Ken Taxi with plate no. GVL 806, and the second, Villamor, drove a Taipan Taxi with plate no. GVG 643.

"I know that refusing to ride and not using the meter are against Citom rules, so please consider this a formal complaint against the following taxi drivers and their taxi companies," Arroyo said in her e-mail.

Arroyo said the hotel security guards told her that non-Cebuanos were "often victimized by abusive drivers."

"I am very disappointed with this behavior and I hope that this matter can be rectified. Please let me know if I need to do anything else to pursue this complaint," she said.

Alex Leyson, LTO director for Central Visayas and a member of the Citom board, immediately ordered the two erring drivers to pay a fine of P1,000.

He also called the drivers and their operators to his office last Tuesday.

Leyson told members of the Citom board during a meeting on Wednesday that the drivers tried to come up with alibis. *Doris Bongcac, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Countdown for Justice

WAPILE

IT IS exactly 371 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

Army official faces charges

JUSTICE Undersecretary Jose Calida has directed the National Bureau of Investigation to prepare a case of physical assault against MSgt. Donald Caigas, head of the intelligence unit of the 204th Infantry Brigade based in Oriental Mindoro.

Caigas was identified as one of those who beat up barangay officials in the province recently, a case that was being investigated by human rights leader Eden Marcellana and farmer leader Eddie Gumanoy when they were brutally murdered last month.

Caigas has failed to appear before a presidential task force that is investigating the murders.

Another case

A possible case of obstruction of justice against those who would harbor Caigas was also ordered prepared by Calida.

The barangay officials were responding to reports that a certain Roger Sales was abducted by the military in Barangay Tambong, Gloria town.

The House Committee on Civil, Political and Human Rights also approved a motion to subpoena Caigas and four other members of the 204th IB intelligence unit during the second hearing on May 13.

Calida revealed their failed efforts to question Caigas during their investigation in the 204th IB military camp in Naujan, Mindoro Oriental despite supposed orders of Col. Juanito Gomez summoning Caigas.

Gomez replaced Col. Jovito Palparan Jr. as commanding officer of the 204th IB. *Clarice Colting, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Trader killed

CABANATUAN CITY—Armed robbers shot and killed a businesswoman in General Llanera town on Thursday night. Francisca Saulo, 35, was with her husband Ricardo when the men fired at them when they refused to give them their money. Francisca succumbed to a lone bullet wound. Police said the Saulos were on their way home from a business transaction when two armed men riding on separate motorcycles blocked their van. The couple lost $2,500, P130,000 cash, three cellphones and jewelry.

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Invalid recall

CABANATUAN CITY—The Commission on Elections declared as invalid the recall petition filed against the son of Sen. Ramon Revilla, San Leonardo Mayor Ramon Revilla-Bautista Jr., and two town councilors. The petition, signed by 88 petitioners, sought to unseat Bautista Jr. and Councilors Andres Melosantos and Felix Abergas. The Comelec said 29 petitioners withdrew their signatures, thus making the petition short of the required majority to hold the recall election.

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Postmen arrested

BALAGTAS, Bulacan—Three more personnel at the postal office here were arrested Wednesday on charges of pilfering letters during an operation conducted by the Philippine Postal Corp. PPC officials said they recovered five sacks of undelivered ordinary, local and foreign letters from the houses of Nicasio de Leon, Arturo Libiran and Lolito Clemente, all employees at the post office here. Earlier, a PPC team arrested Francisco Asis Jr. for allegedly pilfering letters. The suspects were charged with qualified theft before the municipal court.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Nabbed in Slovenia

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—Two Filipinos have been arrested and detained since May 13 by authorities in Slovenia, a former Yugoslav republic, for violations of immigration laws, the Department of Foreign Affairs consular office here confirmed on Saturday. The two—a woman and a man from Mabalacat town—were detained in Tostogna, according to DFA Central Luzon Director Elmer Cato. Cato said the two were victims of an illegal recruiter in the Philippines. Given no passports, they were being sneaked to Italy via the Slovenia border when authorities nabbed them, Cato said. He said Philippine Embassy officials in Moscow had made arrangements to provide legal assistance to the two.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Land for landless

TABACO CITY—At least 38 families here are the first beneficiaries of the land bought by the city government for its landless residents. Mayor Alex Burce said the families were evicted from Purok 4 of Barangay Cobo here after they were defeated in a case filed by a private owner-claimant before the municipal trial court in this city. Burce said the one-hectare lot located in Barangay Cabangan will be divided among landless residents.

Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Kidnap suspect held

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Police on Thursday arrested one of the main suspects in the 1997 kidnapping of a wife of a Filipino-Chinese businessman here. Supt. Willie Dangane, Sarangani police director and chief of the special operations group of the Central Mindanao Police, said Saydon Nilong of Bentung, Barangay Sulit in Polomolok town, South Cotabato, was arrested in a police checkpoint. Nilong, who carries a P200,000 bounty on his head, along with 12 other suspects have been charged in connection with the kidnapping of Pelsy Yaphuckon, wife of Manuel Yaphuckon. Mrs. Yaphuckon was snatched near her house on Dec. 11, 1997. Her family reportedly yielded to the kidnappers' P30 million ransom demand.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Rebs kill own leader

DAVAO CITY—Moro rebels in Kiblawan, Davao del Sur shot and killed their own leader over an alleged dispute on the proceeds of their cattle rustling activities. Senior Supt. Samuel Navaja, Davao del Sur police chief, said they only learned about the death of Jeffrey Buat, a ranking Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) commander in the province, on Friday after the suspects, brothers Polding, Loreto, and Santua Pandoy surrendered. Navaja said Santua, a former barangay kagawad of Tacul Village, and his two brothers told police they had long-planned to kill Buat after the latter failed to give their share in their cattle-rustling activities.

Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau

More funds from EU

BUTUAN CITY—The European Union (EU) was planning to fund humanitarian and rehabilitation projects in war-torn areas of Mindanao to speed up development efforts and rehabilitation of refugees. Jan de Kok, head of the EU delegation to the Philippines, said they were particularly interested in helping the women and the children in conflict areas of the island. De Kok, along with ambassadors from the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, France, and several other EU member countries, came here Tuesday for a three-day working assessment on grass-root funded programs particularly the Women's Health and Safe Motherhood Project. "Under EU commitment to the United Nations, it has fund allocation for humanitarian efforts and rehabilitation of conflicted affected areas," De Kok said. British Ambassador to the Philippines Paul Dimond said their support forms part of their commitment, engagement and cooperation for the development of Mindanao. De Kok also said that Mindanao has huge potential because of its vast resources but continue to be lackluster in attracting European investments and aid largely because of the way the media portrayed the island before the international community. "The news reports are not good, they are sending wrong perception," he said. "Please tell more good news about Mindanao," Dimond also said. *Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Ooops... We did it again! 10 OUT OF 10

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Study shows texting can't hurt grammar

From page A1

Mildred Rojo-Laurilla, assistant professor at the DLSU-Manila's Department of English and Applied Linguistics, presented her findings at a session on "The Language of the Youth" on the first day of The Fifth National Social Science Congress at the Philippine Social Science Council, a private organization of professional social science associations in the Philippines.

The congress theme was "What's With the Filipino Youth: Perspectives from the Social Sciences."

Rojo-Laurilla conducted her study between 2000 and 2001. Her respondents, numbering more than 300 17- and 18-year-old English 1 students from DLSU and the University of the Philippines-Los Baños, were given spelling and grammar tests and asked to answer questionnaires to determine their profiles.

They also had to undergo the texting behavior test, a method she conceptualized.

There were six kinds of texting, according to the study: pure English without abbreviation, pure Filipino without abbreviation, pure English with abbreviation, pure Filipino with abbreviation, a mixture of English and Filipino without abbreviation, and a mixture of English and Filipino with abbreviation.

Ninety-five percent of the DLSU respondents had mobile phones while 71 percent of the UPLB respondents said they were mobile phone owners.

Ninety-nine percent of the DLSU students and all of the UPLB students said they abbreviated words when texting, but this apparently does not affect the students' competency in grammar and spelling. In fact, the results showed that the heavy texters were the ones who got good test scores.

It can be argued that because the students are already in college, their language competency is somehow stable and cannot be influenced easily by text messaging. Rojo-Laurilla is planning to challenge this by conducting a similar study on a younger set of students.

Gay lingo

In the same session, Lourdes M. Portus, who teaches at the Communication Research Department of the UP College of Mass Communication, presented her study on "Mainstreaming the Gay Language."

Portus studied 144 heterosexual young people (84 percent were 18 to 23 years old, 53 percent were female and 47 percent were male) from all over the country. Sixty percent were from Manila, 20 percent were from the Visayas and Mindanao and 20 percent were from various parts of Luzon.

There were students from UP, Ateneo de Manila University, University of Sto. Tomas, AMA and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila, the majority of whom were Communication and Engineering students.

Portus also conducted focus interviews with informants.

All the respondents are aware that the "gay language exists." There were both positive and negative perceptions about the language. "Creative," "artistic," "it's for sharing secrets," "it eases tension," "cheap," "vulgar" and "annoying" were among the impressions.

Portus believes that these reactions also mirror the young people's perception of homosexuals.

Sixty-six percent of the respondents said they used gay lingo.

Many of the respondents said they had been using the gay lingo for over five years. Most of the girls attributed this to having gay friends. Most of the boys said they adopted the language from female friends who had gay friends.

Media influence

The media are also a big influence. Television shows like "Magandang Tanghali, Bayan," "The Buzz," "Eat Bulaga," "Bubble Gang" and "Idol Ko si Kap" expose the young people to the more common gay words like "*charing*," "*chika*," "*chuva*" and "papa."

Although the study showed the benefits the respondents get from using gay jargon ("sense of enjoyment," "joy and laughter," "tension- free conversation," "it's easier to keep secrets," and "group solidarity"), most of them claim to use the language only on occasion—on text, when talking to friends or during informal discussions.

They avoid using it when they are writing formal letters, school papers, formal compositions, answering exams, having class discussions or answering the telephone.

This form of jargon, which started in the 1970s and 1980s as a "coping mechanism," according to Portus, also reflects the "incessant struggle for freedom" of homosexuals in the country and may actually be considered a "tool for empowerment and recognition."

Graffiti

Another study presented was "Graffiti In Schools: Understanding the Youth and Concerns" by Alma G. Facto, director of the Guidance and Testing Division and the Research Division of the Philippine Women's University.

The study began when faculty members at the PWU started complaining about vandalism found on the walls and the students' chairs. Instead of trying to find the culprits, Facto said, "Let's try to find out what they are trying to say to us."

They spent the summer of 2002 inspecting almost all the classrooms and bathrooms at the PWU. Instead of the crib notes and lewd messages they were expecting to find, they discovered more names and scribbles.

The obscene material, messages of sexual nature and death wishes, which were mostly directed at teachers, were few. There was more graffiti found in the girls' bathrooms than in the boys'.

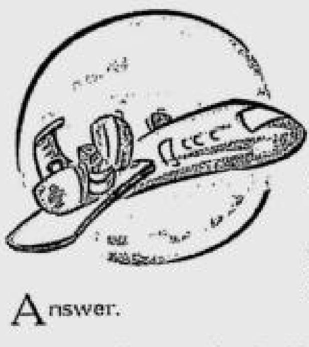
Facto believes that graffiti has become an outlet of expression for young people. "Young people need recognition, a sense of identity. Stress and anxiety find expression in the written form."

Graffiti may also be a call for attention. "They have a need to be recognized as individuals. There's an implication to us educators. We need to pay more attention on a more personal basis, not only the teachers but also the parents," Facto said.

STOP SARS ATTACK

DOH OFFICIAL ADVISORY

MONDAY 19 May 2003



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I can't help it. I have to travel to Singapore next week for a short business trip in spite of the threat of SARS. What will I do to prevent myself of acquiring the disease?

Answer.

Okay, life goes on in spite of SARS and business should really keep on moving. Before you leave, maybe you should get the right information and you might as well inform others who may be traveling with you about SARS. Assemble a travel health kit containing basic first aid and medical supplies. Be sure to include a thermometer, household disinfectant, a supply of surgical masks and disposable gloves (for use if you or someone you are traveling with becomes ill with SARS), and alcohol-based sanitizers for hand hygiene.

While you are in Singapore, or in other areas with SARS, follow the country's SARS prevention measures. To prevent against SARS infection, wash your hands frequently. To minimize the possibility of infection, you may wish to avoid close contact with large numbers of people as much as possible. The Department of Health does not recommend the routine use of masks or other personal protective equipment while in public areas.

If you think you have SARS or symptoms compatible with SARS, you should immediately seek the appropriate health care provider in the country you are going to. You are encouraged to identify these resources in advance. Do not travel while sick and limit your contact with others as much as possible to help prevent the spread of any infectious illness you may have.

Reported SARS cases in the Country
(March 17 - May 16, 2003)

SARS suspects:	
total cumulative admission	82
total discharged	75
presently admitted (May 16, 2003)	9
SARS cases	12.
SARS deaths	2
SARS Recovered/Cured	4

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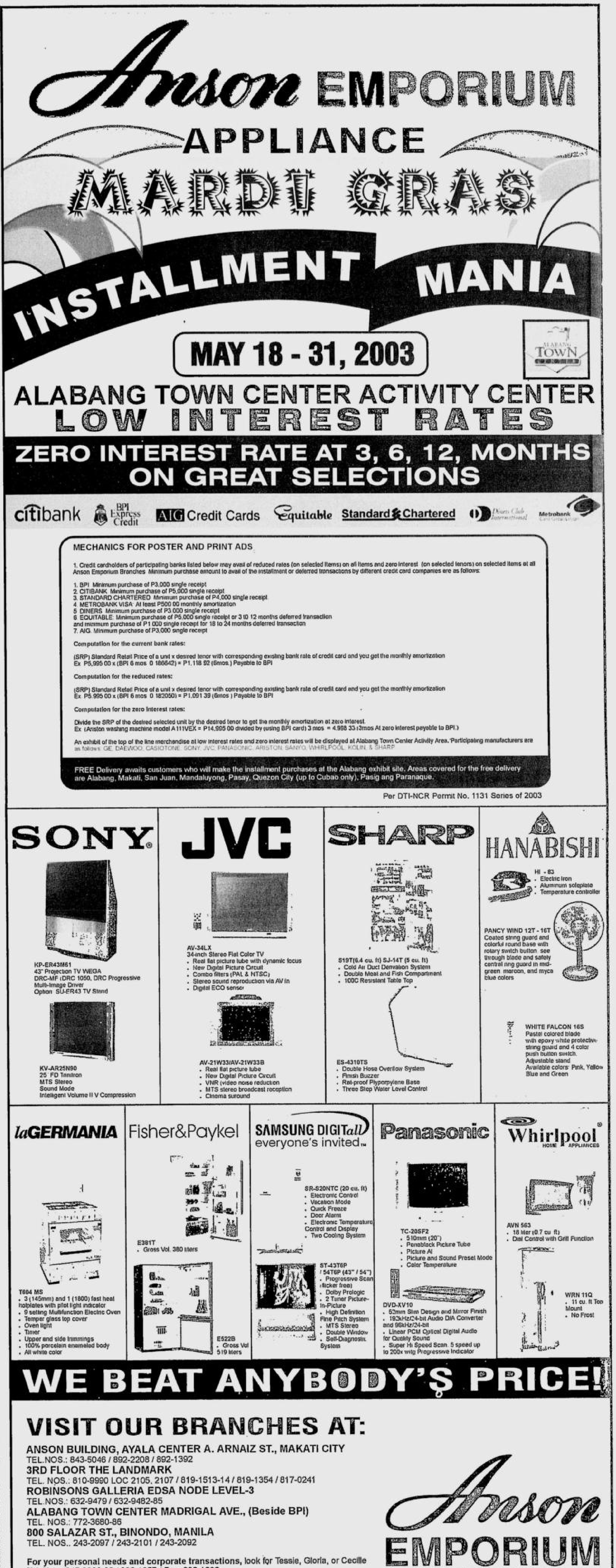

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2 suicide bombers hit Jerusalem

From page A1

The bus attack in Jerusalem happened at an intersection at the northern edge of the city, police said. Five dead passengers were still in their seats in the front of the bus, one leaning out a window, an hour after the blast.

The bomber was dressed in a white prayer shawl and skull cap worn by observant Jews "to give the impression he was coming home from morning prayers," said police spokesperson Gil Kleiman. This is not the first time that suicide bombers had dressed as Jews in order to infiltrate Israel.

Police said the second bomber blew himself up at the entrance to the village of Dahiya el-Barid near Jerusalem. Police said the bomber was killed in the blast on the highway, and no one else was hurt.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the attacks.

The Sunday bombings were part of a sudden surge in Palestinian attacks—four in 12 hours—including a bombing in the West Bank city of Hebron on Saturday night in which a suicide bomber killed an Israeli and his pregnant wife. Also, two armed Palestinians tried to attack a Jewish settlement in the West Bank and were killed by soldiers.

The attacks appeared to be timed to coincide with a summit meeting between Sharon and Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas on Saturday night to discuss a new peace plan. It was the first top-level meeting between the two sides in nearly three years.

In a statement after the meeting, Sharon said it was agreed that the first priority in peacemaking must be stopping Palestinian attacks.

The bus bomber struck at a few minutes before 6 a.m. (0300 GMT) on Sunday morning, at the beginning of the rush hour on a work day in Israel. Witnesses said the bomb went off on a large bus divided into two sections as it neared a bridge in one of Jerusalem's largest intersections, outside the Arab neighborhood of Shuafat and the Jewish neighborhood of French Hill, in the part of Jerusalem that Israel captured in the 1967 war and is claimed by the Palestinians.

Levy said the bomber used a medium-size explosive device that shattered the bus.

It was the first such attack in Jerusalem since November. In 93 suicide attacks since the current violence erupted in September 2000, 357 bystanders have been killed. Most were carried out by Hamas and Islamic Jihad, but recently the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades, linked to the mainstream Fatah, had taken responsibility.

Witnesses and rescue workers said the bomber blew himself up at the front of the bus. The long vehicle was blown to the side of the road, and all the windows were shattered. A woman's purse lay in the street about 70 meters in front of the bus.

"The horror has struck again," said Israeli foreign ministry spokesperson Jonathan Peled. "If the Palestinian Authority does not begin fighting terror immediately, we will have to take more measures."

Morocco

The attacker who survived the Morocco bombings remains in custody, while investigators have identified six of the 13 dead assailants.

Interior Minister Mostapha Sahel said Saturday that the investigation has made "quick progress."

US officials have identified an Egyptian al-Qaida leader Saif al-Adel as an organizer of the Riyadh attack, and The Washington Post reported Sunday that he was thought to have become the network's top military officer after Mohammed Atef was killed in Afghanistan in 2001.

The Saudi bombings and other recent attacks were conducted by "regular al-Qaida folks" who have moved into positions of authority because previous leaders had been killed or captured, the Post report said.

Al-Qaida may be unleashing "as many strikes as possible in a short period of time" to prove it is still viable, the report said, citing US officials and terrorism experts.

Three Saudi nationals accused of being part of an al-Qaida cell were sentenced to 10 years in prison in February for plotting attacks against tourist targets in Morocco and the Strait of Gibraltar last year. Six Moroccan accomplices received jail terms of up to a year.

Friday's bloodbath in Casablanca, certain to hurt Morocco's vital tourism industry, followed a series of terror alerts over the past week by Western governments for the Middle East, east Africa and Southeast Asia, and sparked indignation in the West and across the Muslim world.

US President George W. Bush "strongly" condemned the attacks on international and Jewish targets, while Secretary of State Colin Powell offered help in tracking down the perpetrators.

Muslim outrage

Middle Eastern nations and Islamic groups were also quick to express their outrage.

In Riyadh, the Muslim World League (MWL) said the latest attacks raised questions about "the suspicious objectives of the terror gangs, working under Islamic banners, which have incited international forces against Islam and Muslims."

Many suspected members of radical Islamic groups have been arrested in Morocco in recent months, and US officials have praised Rabat's cooperation in exchanging intelligence on terror suspects and actively pursuing individuals believed to be associated with al-Qaida.

Morocco was cited among a list of "apostate" Muslim nations—along with Jordan, Nigeria, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Yemen—in a cassette message attributed to Bin Laden and distributed to the media in February.

On Saturday, several hundred people took to the streets of the Moroccan capital Rabat to protest the attacks, shouting slogans, such as "No to terrorism, yes to democracy."

At least 18 of the Casablanca victims were killed at the Casa de Espagna, a private Spanish club, restaurant and cultural center, although Madrid officials said only two of them were Spanish.

As Spain prepares for local and regional elections on May 25, opposition Socialists and the center-left El Pais newspaper were quick to link the attack to Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar's support for the US-led invasion of Iraq. *Reports from AP and AFP*

Malacañang cries foul . . .

From page A1

"specific threat" against any installation in Manila.

"We face terrorist threats," Tiglao admitted in a teleconference. But he pointed out that "police and intelligence forces have been quite vigilant and we think that Manila and other parts of the country are still safe for travel."

Asked if Manila would file protests against the United States and the United Kingdom, Tiglao said: "We have to check the procedure of the DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs)."

The two countries had issued warnings against travel to Southeast Asia and the Philippines because of terrorist threats comparable to the bombing of Bali, Indonesia in October last year.

The US Department of State issued the warning against travel to Malaysia, citing the residual threat posed by the Abu Sayyaf.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office of Great Britain, on the other hand, updated its travel advisory on the Philippines. It said there was a greater risk of terrorism throughout the country and non-essential travel to Mindanao should be avoided.

The British foreign office updated its travel advisory on the Philippines simultaneously with members of the Commonwealth—Australia, Canada and New Zealand. All four countries issued updated travel advisories on the Philippines on May 15, a few days after the bombing in Riyadh.

"We believe there is a greater risk of terrorist activity throughout the Philippines at the present time," the British advisory read.

In the same teleconference, Tiglao said that Macapagal administration "condemns in the strongest possible terms" Friday's bombing in Casablanca, Morocco, which killed 40 people and injured 100 others.

"We sympathize with the victims," Tiglao said. "We are familiar and not strangers to such terrorist attacks."

The Pandacan oil depot, Malacañang, LRT stations, shopping malls, and even schools have been placed under stricter security measures.

"We are securing the nunciature because that is part of diplomatic security. The papal nuncio is the representative of the Pope," Bulaong said.

He said the WPD will close the southbound lane of Roxas Boulevard in front of the US Embassy if the police find that there is a credible security threat.

The service road in front of the housing compound of US Embassy employees in Pasay City was closed yesterday. The portion near the Cuneta Astrodome was barricaded with concrete.

Bulaong said the WPD has made up a list of possible high-impact targets in the capital, which includes universities.

"We have of course secured these places. And we have increased our checkpoints, especially at night," he said.

The police have also held meetings with the leaders of the different Muslim communities in Manila to weed out terrorists who might hide there.

In Kuala Lumpur, the Malaysian government said it would hold a security briefing for all foreign ambassadors in Malaysia to assure them the country is safe, after the United States renewed warnings about possible terror attacks in Southeast Asia.

Deputy Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the briefing was necessary because some foreign governments "have the perception that since our country is an Islamic country, we are considered unsafe." *With a report from AP*

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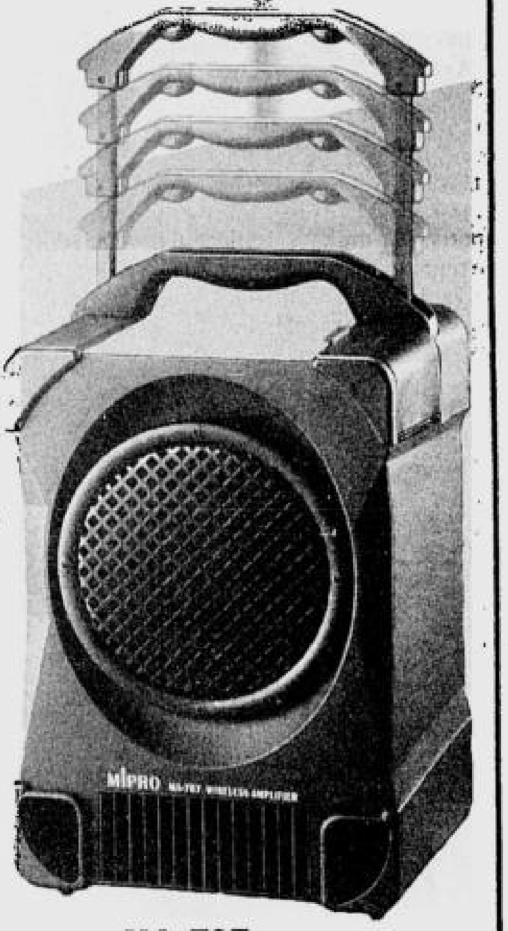

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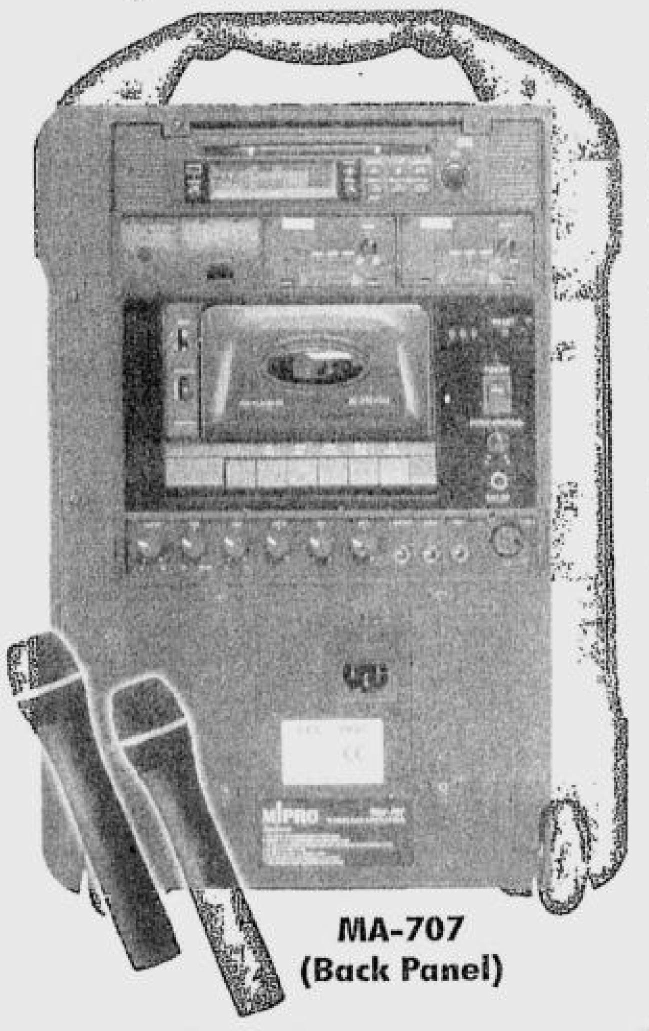

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Bombs rain on MILF lairs

From page A1

press briefing here at around 2 p.m. yesterday.

He said civilians near the Zamboanga operation put the number of MILF deaths at "30 to 35." In Lanao, particularly in Piagapo town, Kyamko said, reports from civilians indicated that about 50 had been killed.

In Camp Aguinaldo, Gen. Narciso Abaya, Armed Forces chief of staff, said the assaults were directed against selected strongholds of the separatist MILF where suspected assailants have fled following bombings and attacks that have left more than 210 people dead so far this year.

"These are MILF camps in Mindanao where attackers take refuge, rest and get their logistics after committing atrocities," Abaya told radio station dzMM.

In Malacañang, Presidential Chief of Staff Rigoberto Tiglao hinted that the counterterrorist operation was not limited to the MILF.

"It's irrelevant now" whether the target is the MILF, the Abu Sayyaf, the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom gang or the communist New People's Army, Tiglao said.

"This republic cannot allow armed groups to attack towns, kill civilians, burn civilian houses," Tiglao said. "We do not have the choice but to degrade the capabilities of whichever armed groups are undertaking these terrorist attacks."

Asked if the President's order included the NPA, Tiglao said: "The NPA has been tagged as a terrorist group by the US and the policy of this government is to really decimate any armed group defying laws of the land."

Sipakit complex

Maj. Gen. Trifonio Salazar, commander of the 1st Infantry Division in Zamboanga del Sur, said the military operation in the Zamboanga peninsula, particularly in the Sipakit complex located within the boundaries of Sibuco, Sirawai and Siocon towns and in areas near Baliguian town, lasted up to the late hours of Saturday.

"We have delivered around 29 rounds of bombs during our operation, which lasted up to 9 o'clock last night. We have observed that while we (were) shelling the area, there were probing fires from the enemy while they were withdrawing and finding out the presence of our forces," Salazar said.

Kyamko said one of the rebels killed was a leader of the MILF raid on Maigo town last month.

"A certain Kumander Kagi Wali, the brigade commander of the MILF in Central Mindanao, was also killed, along with many others, according to intelligence report," he said.

He noted that intelligence operatives in target areas were basing their figures on civilian reports. The military would still have to verify the numbers, he said.

Kyamko also announced that some MILF ground commanders had surrendered.

He cited the case of Abdul Asis Omadia, alias Kumander Tropical, who yielded with 13 of his men to the 47th Infantry Battalion in President Quirino town on Saturday.

"Two other MILF rebels in Sitio Katuyan in Sirawai and one in Davao del Sur surrendered along with their respective firearms," Kyamko said.

Salazar said it was hard to determine the exact number of rebel casualties in the Sipakit complex, noting that 17 deaths were reported on the rebel side on Saturday.

He said the rebels broke into two groups, with one withdrawing toward Sirawai and the other toward Sibuco or Tungawan towns.

MILF reaction

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said their field forces in the Zamboanga peninsula and near Camp Abubakar, the former main MILF base in Maguindanao, did not notice exploding bombs in their areas.

But he admitted that MILF forces in Lanao del Norte, particularly in the towns of Kauswagan, Munai and Piagapo, and in the Buliok complex in North Cotabato had been subjected to military bombardments.

"The bombardments have been going on even before (the President's) order. So these things were not new to us," he said.

Kabalu said despite the artillery fire and aerial assaults, MILF forces were holding their ground and were fighting back.

In Buliok, he said, MILF forces killed at least five soldiers during an ambush on Saturday. Three soldiers were wounded.

"The soldiers were rowing a boat toward their detachment around 3 p.m. when our forces fired on them," Kabalu said.

He said a similar incident in Barangay Guipol in M'lang, North Cotabato, also resulted in at least three fatalities on the government side.

He said no MILF forces were injured.

He said the President might have given the order, talking tough on the eve of her US state visit, to wrangle more military assistance from Washington and cover up what he said was her military's failure to crush the decades-old Moro rebellion in the South.

Lanao del Sur Rep. Faysah Dumarpa said she was worried over the increasing number of civilians being displaced by the military operations in the Lanao provinces. As of last count, more than 30,000 people had already been driven out of their homes.

"The MILF cannot just simply snub the deadline set by the government. No matter how difficult the conditions are, Chairman Salamat (Hashim) must be compelled to make a counter-offer if he intends to put an end to the strife in Mindanao," Dumarpa said.

Beefed-up forces

Kyamko said the military was determined to continue with the operation by beefing up its forces.

"We have sent additional troops to all the infantry divisions in Mindanao, one battalion each for the division as the minimum, and the division commanders are given the leeway to add more troops," he said.

The fresh troops came from Luzon and the Visayas.

Kyamko also said US military forces were providing support "in terms of training and saving life."

"US-trained soldiers out of Balikatan 02-1 and those who undertook the Bayanihan exercises were utilized for the antiterror campaign," he said.

Asked how the military was able to continue bombing late into Saturday night, Kyamko only said: "Secret."

In Lanao del Norte, Maj. Gen. Cristolito Balaoing, commander of the Army's 4th Infantry Division based in Cagayan de Oro City, said soldiers had occupied the lair of MILF commander Lucsa Datu in Barangay Old Poblacion.

Balaoing said the operation was part of military efforts to arrest the April 24 raiders of Maigo. "When the troops drew closer to the area, they observed people running away and we suspected those were rebels," he said.

He said soldiers were surprised when they discovered that Datu's lair included elementary and high school buildings.

The last time soldiers set foot in the Old Poblacion was during the late 1980s.

Duterte's alarm

In Davao City, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte sounded the alarm over the hostilities, saying there were indications a civil war was in the offing. *Julie S. Alipala, Dennis Jay C. Santos, Grace C. Albasin and Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau; with reports from Carlito Pablo, Martin Marfil, AP and AFP*

'Attack order means . . .

From page A1

who also hails from Mindanao, said the Moro Islamic Liberation Front should not be immediately blamed for every terrorist attack in Mindanao.

"It is not right to immediately point to the MILF as the one behind every terrorist attack in Mindanao. It has admitted the Siocon attack and those behind it should be brought to justice," Guingona said at a news briefing over the weekend.

He said he was still optimistic about the stalled peace process because Catholic bishops and Muslim ulama are working out a plan to bring the government and the rebels back to the negotiating table.

But a former AFP chief of staff, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, said he supported the President's directive. He cautioned the military, however, to make sure its campaign would not affect the civilian population.

"That order is in order," Biazon said in a separate interview. He said he had been pushing for "more aggressive operations against terrorist groups and the Abu Sayyaf" since the bombing of the Davao City airport two months ago.

Biazon said the military should improve its intelligence gathering so that when it conducted the bombing operations in terrorist sites in Mindanao, no civilians would be affected.

Equally supportive of the President's order was Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, who said the Chief Executive was prompted to issue her order because of the "continued use by MILF elements of terrorist attacks on helpless civilians and non-military targets."

Honest brokers

Pimentel said government should pursue peace talks with the MILF. But he also reiterated his proposal that the United States come in as "honest brokers" of peace between the Philippine government and the MILF.

"Since the President is in the US for a state visit, she could bring this up with US President George Bush," Pimentel suggested.

He said US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage had already said that all the Philippine government had to do was to ask and Washington would accommodate its request.

But Guingona frowned on the idea of foreign countries coming in to mediate in peace negotiations.

In his weekly press conference, he announced that bishops and ulama are gaining headway in helping create circumstances conducive for peace talks. *With a report from Gerald Lacuarta*

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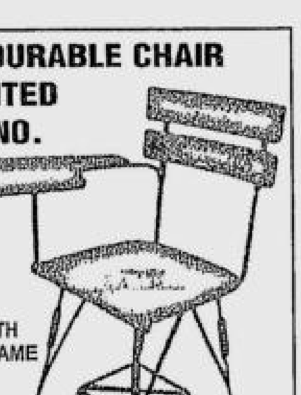

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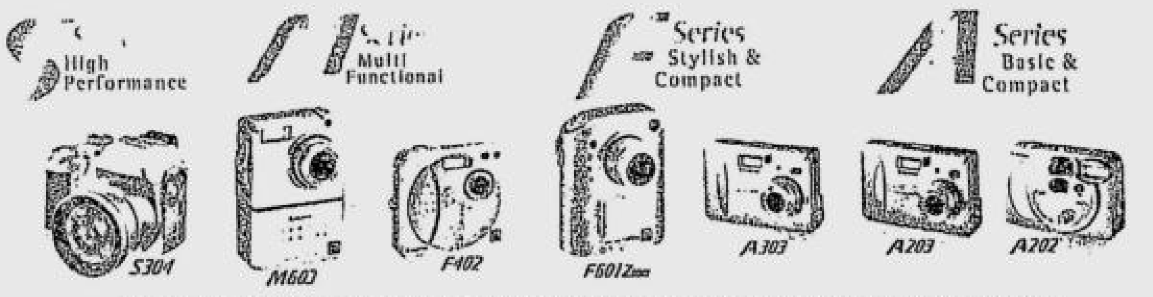

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US to ease flow of OFW remittances

From page A1

on Saturday night.

Alvarez explained that the US government would arrange for American banks all over the world to cut remittance rates for OFWs. In the Middle East, remittances cost $4 per transaction.

Ms Macapagal, wearing a *barong* suit, went straight to Mass at the cathedral upon her arrival here. She was welcomed by Cardinal Roger Mahony, archbishop of Los Angeles, and leaders of the Filipino-American community.

She was accompanied by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo and their children—Luli and Dato, with his new wife Kakai Manotoc.

She was also joined by Senate President Franklin Drilon and his wife Mila, Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. and his wife Gina, Representatives Monico Puentebella and Teodoro Locsin Jr., Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, Ambassador Albert del Rosario, Consul General Marciano Paynor Jr., Secretaries Angelo Reyes of defense and Richard Gordon of tourism, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez; Alvarez and presidential advisers Mai Jimenez on special projects and Luis "Chavit" Singson of the North Luzon Quadrangle; Batangas Gov. Hermilando Mandanas and Olongapo City Mayor Kate Gordon.

Two realities

Setting the tone of her visit, Ms Macapagal said the victory of the US-led coalition against the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq required a new perspective on political and economic security based on a recognition of two realities.

"First, that Asia must take greater responsibility for its own political and economic security and the second, that strong relations with the US will contribute greatly to regional stability and progress, as well as greater success in addressing terrorism," the President said in a 10-minute speech applauded 11 times.

She said Asian self-reliance would promote immediate and effective response to clear and present dangers before they get out of control.

"For the Philippines, that perspective must take into account the over 7 million of our men and women who are making significant contributions to the economic development of many countries," she said.

Ms Macapagal said the passage of the Absentee Voting Act was a recognition of the important role that the overseas Filipinos play in the Philippine economy.

Ms Macapagal said the Philippine government was working on a new set of joint military exercises to finally finish off the Abu Sayyaf group. She announced that before she left Manila on Saturday night she "welcomed back to civilization" the last two remaining hostages of the Abu Sayyaf.

She said recent events in the world called for a renewal of a deep faith and abiding trust in God.

"To the cowardly acts of terrorism and the threats of more war using methods and weapons of mass destruction comes now the spread of a deadly disease whose nature and cure still eludes the scientists," she said, referring to the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome that has affected many Asian countries.

But she said great progress was being made and that the biggest progress achieved so far was in the attitude toward these threats.

"On March 20, the US-led coalition of countries decided that the best way to overcome fear was to defeat it. The outcome is a victory welcomed by everyone except the technocrats of terror and tyranny in Iraq," she said.

Veterans

The President also paid tribute to the contributions made by the Filipino World War II veterans "who gave so much in defense of freedom."

The Equity Bill was passed in the previous US Congress, but a new Congress has been elected. "We will continue the fight," the President said, adding that the US government has been providing medical equipment to the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

Ms Macapagal, who will take center stage in Washington on Tuesday, said her three-day state visit would "elevate the allied partnership between the two countries that I know you love so much."

She asked the Filipino-American community to pray for the success of her state visit.

Ms Macapagal departs from Los Angeles Sunday at 8:30 a.m. on a chartered flight. She and the First Gentleman will be flown by the US government to Fort McNair where she will be given arrival honors. Formal honors would be conferred on her in Washington on Monday morning and at the state dinner.

Special relationship

De Venecia said the President's state visit could raise several billion dollars. "We've now reached a special relationship with the US to the level even when we still have the US bases. I think military and economic assistance is for certain coming in fairly large amounts," he told reporters.

Drilon said the President would be the first Asian head of state to be invited by the Bush administration. Ms Macapagal's will only be the third state visit in Washington since Bush came to power in 2001. "That indicates an improvement (in RP-US relations) and a recognition of us being strong allies."

He said the President's staunch support for the US campaign against international terrorism was paying off.

Reyes said the visit would reaffirm the strong bond and alliance between the two countries. "It is honoring the President and our country more than anything else."

He said the Philippine government's plan to label the Moro Islamic Liberation Front as a foreign terrorist organization would not be specifically discussed during the one-on-one meeting between Bush and the President at 10 a.m. on Monday.

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Angeles City sizzles . . .

From page A1

of boiled and finely chopped pork cheeks and 120 kg each of chicken liver, pork rump and onions on the huge sizzling plate. The mixture was seasoned with 40 liters of soy sauce, juice from 4,000 pieces of calamansi, 400 pieces of *siling labuyo* (chili pepper) and 20 kg more of chopped onions.

Thrown into the oil-coated and fully heated vessel and flipped continuously using 16 huge aluminum spatulas, the ingredients crackled, filling the air with the familiar tangy smell of the night's main course.

The city government has placed its hopes on the *sisig* to shed off its sleazy reputation as a prostitution hub earned from almost a century of hosting an American military base.

In less than an hour, about 500 people who trooped to the festival savored the sight of *sisig* prepared right before their eyes. They lined up and partook of the hefty servings of two cups each.

Settled on tables that restaurant owners in Balibago arranged along the road, the guests, many with children in tow, ate the *sisig* plain or with steamed rice. Beer drinkers relished it as a *pulutan* (appetizer).

"Good, good, but I wanted to taste more *calamansi* in it," said Lucia Cunanan, proprietor of the famous "Lucing's" which since 1974 has turned *sisig* from a pregnant woman's craving to *pulutan* and common table fare.

Origins

Fray Diego Bergano, in his "Vocabulario de la Lengua Pampanga en Romance," said *sisig* in the province during the 17th century was a cocktail snack comprised of unripe mango, guava or papaya. It was also anything that was fermented in vinegar.

"*Mapanisig*" was someone who was fond of eating sour food, Bergano observed.

Expounding on Bergano's observations of local practices, the Holy Angel University's Center for Kapampangan Studies wrote that the "*cacagli* (women in their first trimester of pregnancy) nibbled on sour fruits to relieve the discomfort of early signs of pregnancy."

"It can be supposed that at this stage, the expectant mother seeks comfort in the wisdom of older women and, being Kapampangan, they always have something to munch as they chatter," the center wrote.

Soon, the woman's concern for the baby in her womb grew. *Sisig* became a food for the *butul ning pingul* (food for the baby's bones).

"As the pregnancy progressed, usually in the last trimester, the expectant mother prepared a different version of *sisig*. This time, the dish was a concoction of pig ears and tail in vinegar. The crunchy (*lulugut*) texture of the cartilage was believed to help make the growing fetus' bones (*pungul*) stronger. Contrary to the socialization aspect of the basic *sisig*, the dish is now eaten mainly for its nutritional value and is mainly a mother-and-unborn baby bonding time," the center explained.

How did *sisig* become popular *pulutan* fare?

A tale of drinkers

The center traces that to the tale of drinkers themselves.

Sometime in the 1970s, a local barbecue vendor named Fely overheard two of her patrons outdoing each other on stories about how they managed to leave their pregnant wives at home so they could join their drinking buddies.

"Empathizing with the wives, Aling Fely thought of a way to get even with the husbands. She served them *sisig*, which was until then only eaten by pregnant women. Fortunately or unfortunately, the drunkards took a liking to this concoction and since then, (*sisig*) has become a favorite *pulutan*," the center wrote.

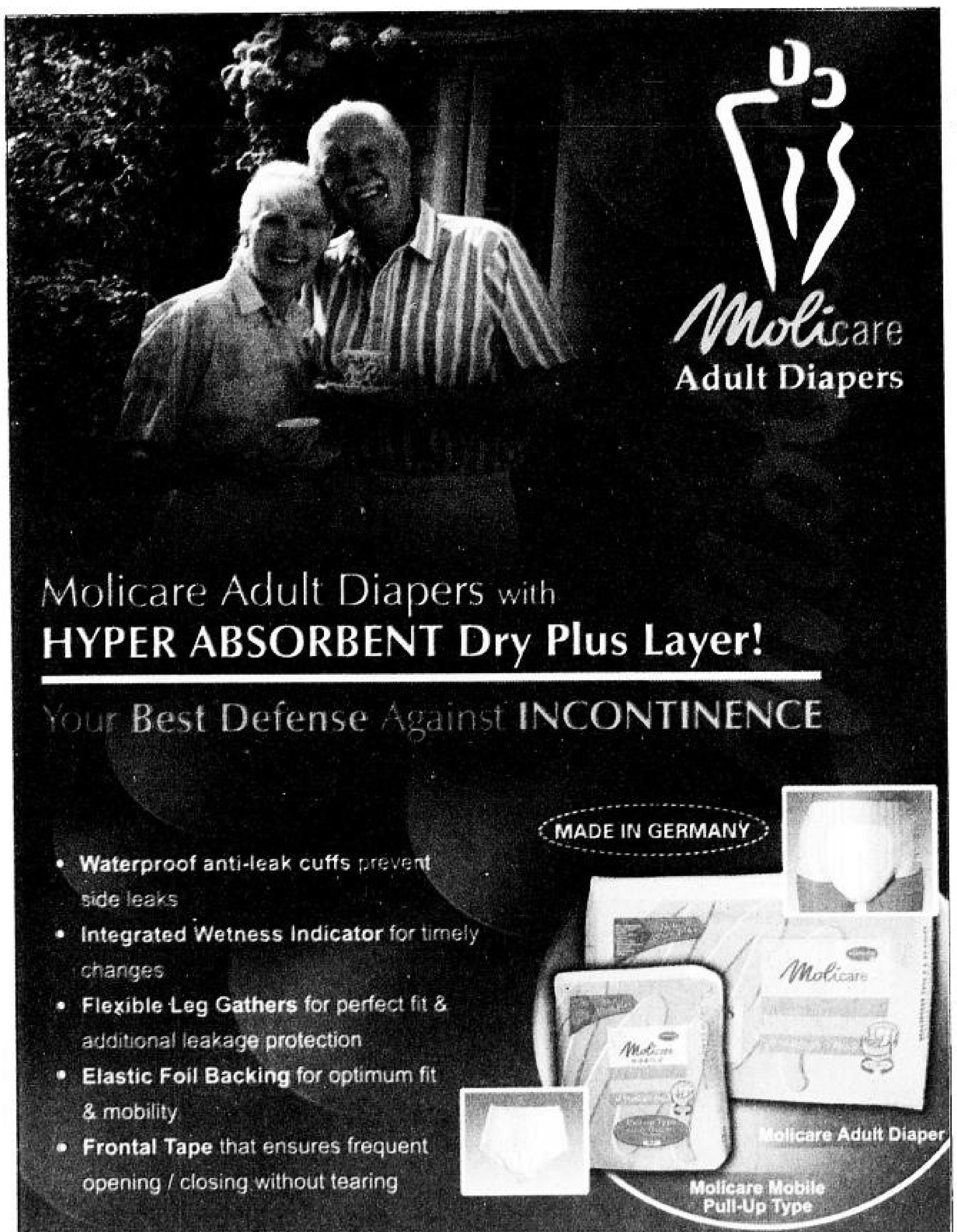
The center said it was Cunanan who made innovations on the *sisig* and pioneered the business of selling it. Now 73, she still cooks in her restaurant.

Because pig ears and tail had only little meat, Cunanan added pork cheeks to the dish. She chopped and seasoned this with onions and chicken liver.

Cunanan also departed from the traditional use of vinegar, replacing this with *calamansi*.

By the 1980s, the Sugay family began "Sisig Benedict" on Lakandula Road and gave *sisig* a new life and look by serving it on sizzling plates.

About the same time in Quezon City, Trellis restaurant, owned by Ronnie Tayag and friends, popularized the dish in Metro Manila.



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Mindanao conflict linked to US aid plan

From page A1

curity Council.

While France and Germany, the leading major European powers that blocked the invasion resolution in the Council, may be punished in a more vengeful manner than how the United States treated its erstwhile enemies—Japan and Germany after World War II—Ms Macapagal will be rewarded with economic and military aid. Also enjoying the US largesse is Poland, a member of the coalition of the willing which dispatched a token military force to Iraq.

Poland has been assigned as a surrogate peacekeeping force in Iraq to join US and British forces. With this mandate, Poland delivered the ultimate insult to the outcast nations—France and Germany—by inviting them to send peacekeeping forces under the Polish command.

This is Poland's way of getting back at Germany, which invaded Warsaw in September 1939, igniting World War II. There is nothing more humiliating to France and Germany than their troops taking orders from Polish officers.

Sure, Ms Macapagal will be the third head of state to be invited with full state honors since Bush took office. A previous guest, President Vicente Fox of Mexico has lost favor and is being punished with the withdrawal of US economic concessions, after it failed to support the US diplomatic campaign in the Security Council for an invasion mandate.

Ms Macapagal will not only bask in the light of Bush's favor and in his celebration of a swift military victory that is now being used as a justification for the invasion of Iraq in the face of the evaporation of the prospects of finding weapons of mass destruction—which was the justification the coalition of the willing invoked in the invasion of Iraq.

Chemistry

She has chemistry with Bush, and she will come home with an aid of which we will not know until after she is back home. For the first time since the United States pulled out its military bases in the Philippines in 1992, the country has been frozen out of US favor, and aid trickled to tokenism to keep alive the letter of the 1951 RP-US Mutual Defense Treaty.

The Philippines is back on the radar screen of US strategic concerns after Sept. 11 2001 when the United States needed a broad range of allies to combat terrorism that struck the US mainland for the first time since the British bombarded Washington during the revolutionary war.

Ms Macapagal's instant support of the US coalition up to the war on Iraq was partly intuitive and partly based on her pro-US pre-disposition. She is more surefooted on her foreign policy decisions, which have paid off for her in terms of reviving US strategic concern in the Philippines and in ending Washington's 10-year cold war with Manila, than about her domestic policies.

The biggest drawback of Ms Macapagal is found in her household—and this element together with its potential for creating political embarrassment for her—is the main reason for her withdrawal from the 2004 presidential election.

Mindanao conflict

I have on good authority that her withdrawal has pleased the Bush establishment, which has a genuine esteem for Ms Macapagal but which does not want itself to be seen tied to a regime vulnerable to corruption scandals. From these sources, I gather that Washington's interest now is that the aid it is giving to Ms Macapagal will go to programs that will turn the tide of terrorism in Mindanao, and that its economic component will be focused on economic programs that will not only undercut the basis of unrest in Mindanao, but also pump-prime economic development.

The escalation of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front bombings in Mindanao serves to underline the linkage between the Mindanao conflict and the American strategic compass of aiding countries which are vulnerable to terrorist attacks, such as the Philippines.

Thus, if the Macapagal delegation emphasizes the connection of the Mindanao conflict with the American global strategy to fight terrorism, already having a revival in the suicide bombings in Saudi Arabia, Ms Macapagal can find in Washington ears hospitable to packaging a new aid formula that will use the Mindanao conflict as the organizing element and centerpiece of the aid program.

In short, my argument is that the key to Ms Macapagal's effort to rebuild her political capital and endorse a winning presidential candidate in 2004 is how she deploys aid to combat the MILF and Abu Sayyaf terrorism while she infuses funds into Mindanao for its economic development.

This argument will be elaborated in the next article.

SUERTRES 1 9 5
(In exact order)

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
3 5 10 19 32 40

METRO

E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

Drowned man threatens water supply

Thousands of liters of drinking water drained in reservoir to flush out dead body

RANDY Diaz has picked the wrong time to pick fruits on Saturday when he falls into this air ventilation chamber and drowns. Manila Water officials are still trying to remove his remains out of the aqueduct.
JOAN BONDOC

By Agnes Donato

THE BODY of Randy Diaz who fell into the ventilation chambers of the Manila Water Co. Inc. (MWCI) in Quezon City last Saturday has yet to be recovered after it got stuck in the aqueduct.

But MWCI has assured the public that water being distributed through the MWCI pipelines was "safe and potable."

MWCI media relations manager Ranulfo Habaluyas said in a press briefing yesterday that the amount of chlorine in the water is enough to disinfect it, adding that MWCI would increase the frequency of dosing chlorine at the Balara treatment facility as a safety precaution.

He said that MWCI had temporarily shut down several pipelines and was disposing thousands of liters of water to flush out Diaz's body into the San Juan reservoir, which is no longer in use.

If the body does not drift into the reservoir, the MWCI will permanently decommission the mainline and drain it to give way to a physical inspection of the reservoir, according to Habaluyas.

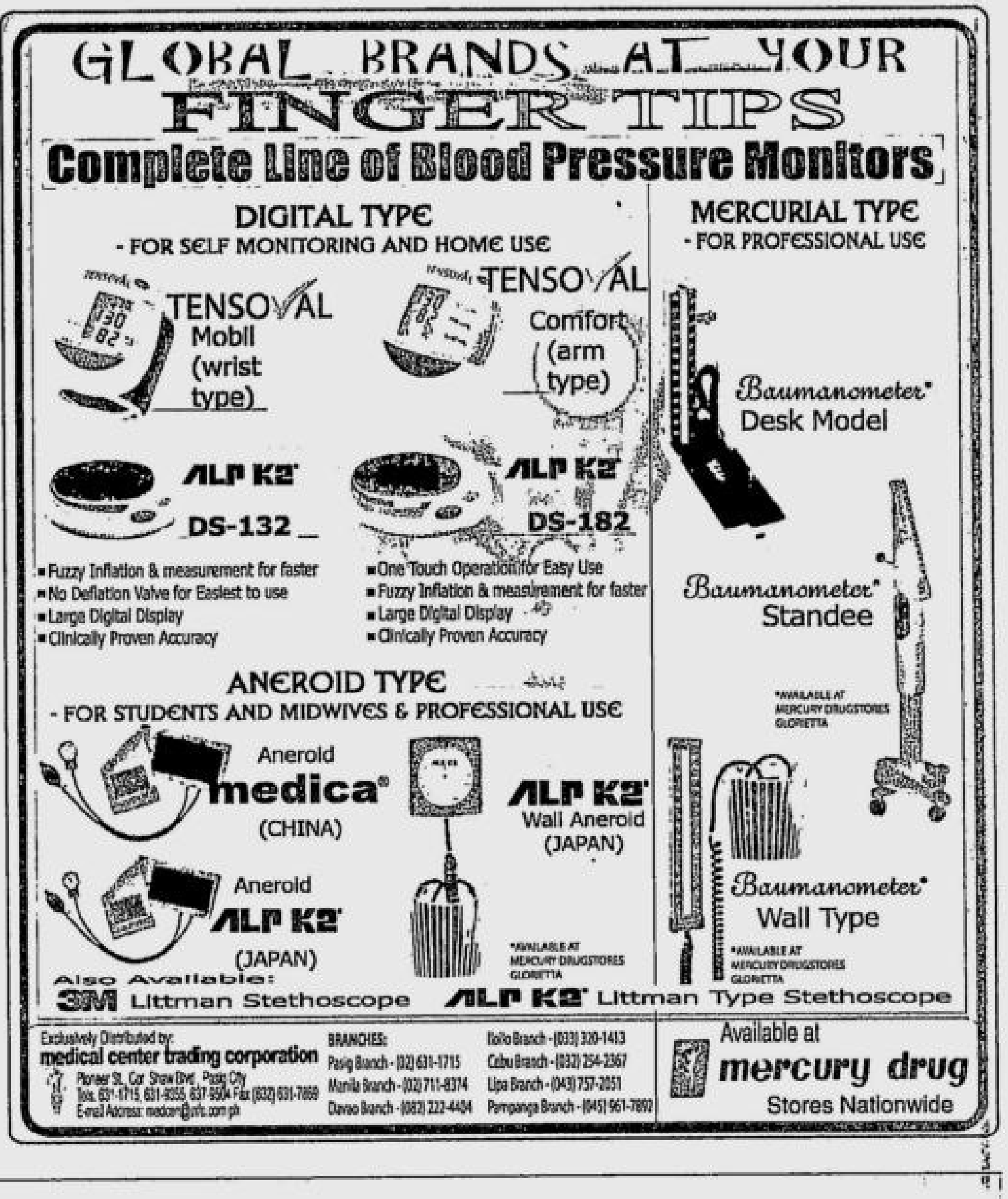
This will result in water service disruptions in San Juan, Mandaluyong and Makati.

Diaz, 19, of Escopa 3 Bliss, Barangay Escopa, and five others were picking fruits from the trees around the MWCI facility when he fell into a large ventilation chamber leading to the aqueduct.

He was immediately swept away by the strong current inside the water mainline.

The ventilation chambers are about four to

DROWNED/ A22



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LATE SPORTS

Cariaso lifts Tigers

By June Navarro

GAMES WEDNESDAY
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JEFFREY Cariaso wasn't thinking of reaching the 5,000-point plateau. What the 6-foot-3 slasher knew was that his Coca-Cola Tigers would miss an automatic Asian Invitationals ticket if they lose against the victory-starved Alaska Aces.

Keeping that in mind, Cariaso did a little of everything for the Tigers last night, including a nifty pass to Rob Wainwright in the three-point area that he converted to seal a 90-87 win over the Aces in the Samsung PBA All Filipino Cup at the Araneta Coliseum.

Cariaso became the 49th player to score 5,000 points by hitting a jumper with 44 seconds left in the first quarter.

With their ninth victory in 16 games, the Tigers moved within two wins of making the Invitationals.

The Aces stretched their string of misfortunes to six straight games and fell to 8-9.

Wynne Arboleda's running jumper in the dying seconds carried FedEx past Sta. Lucia Realty, 76-75, in the second game. The Express' 10th win in 16 games enabled them to tie San Miguel Beer for the lead in Group A as both teams earned automatic slots in the Asian Invitationals. The Realtors fell to 8-9.

Meanwhile, the PBA yesterday presented the players who will see action in the classic Toyota-Crispa reunion match which kicks off the PBA All Star weekend on May 30 also at the Big Dome.

PBA greats such as Atoy Co, Philip Cezar, Freddie Hubalde of Crispa and Toyota's Orly Bauzon, Oscar Rocha, Gil Cortez, Boy Clarino graced the presentation.

COCA-COLA 90—Cariaso 20, Hatfield 18, Wainwright 13, Reavis 12, Juinio 8, Morano 6, Avenido 5, Hugnatan 4, Antonio 4, Bolado 0, Abuda 0.

ALASKA 87—Cortez 20, Allado 15, Arigo 15, Cablay 14, Camaso 12, Feihl 7, Padilla 2, Dual 2, Tejada 0, Peek 0.

Quarters: 17-24, 38-36, 62-63, 90-87.

CEU coed reported kidnapped

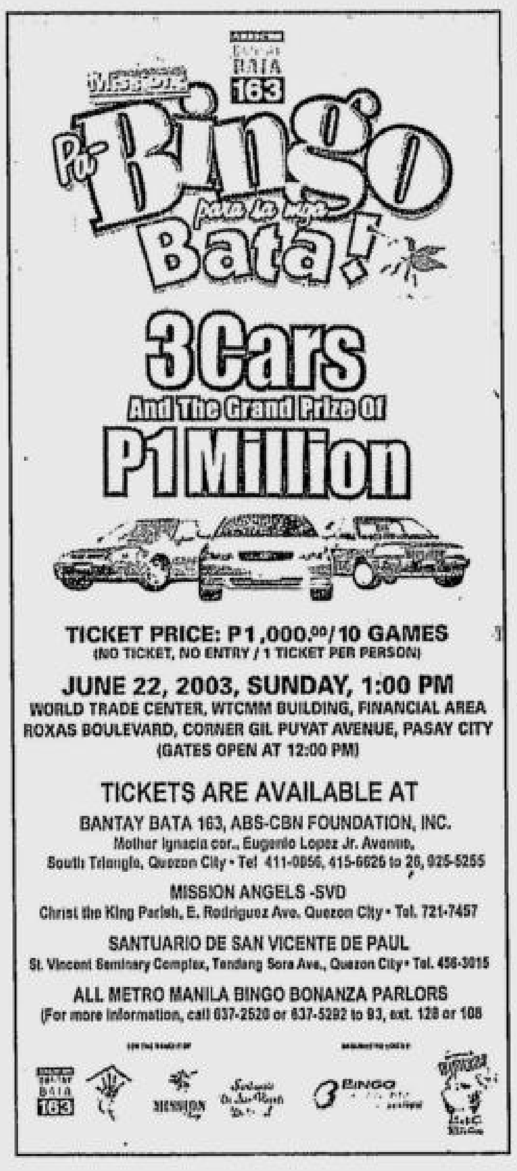
By Philip Tubeza

A STUDENT of Centro Escolar University student was reported kidnapped after she enrolled in the school last Wednesday.

The 17-year-old student, a resident of BF Homes, Parañaque, failed to return home after enrolling on Wednesday morning, police said.

But investigators said no one has demanded for ransom and that the student had sent her boyfriend a text message, saying that she was robbed and that she was still on board an FX, on Thursday.

Police said the student went to school at about 10 a.m. Wednesday to enroll. School guards said she left the school at about 2 p.m. the same day.



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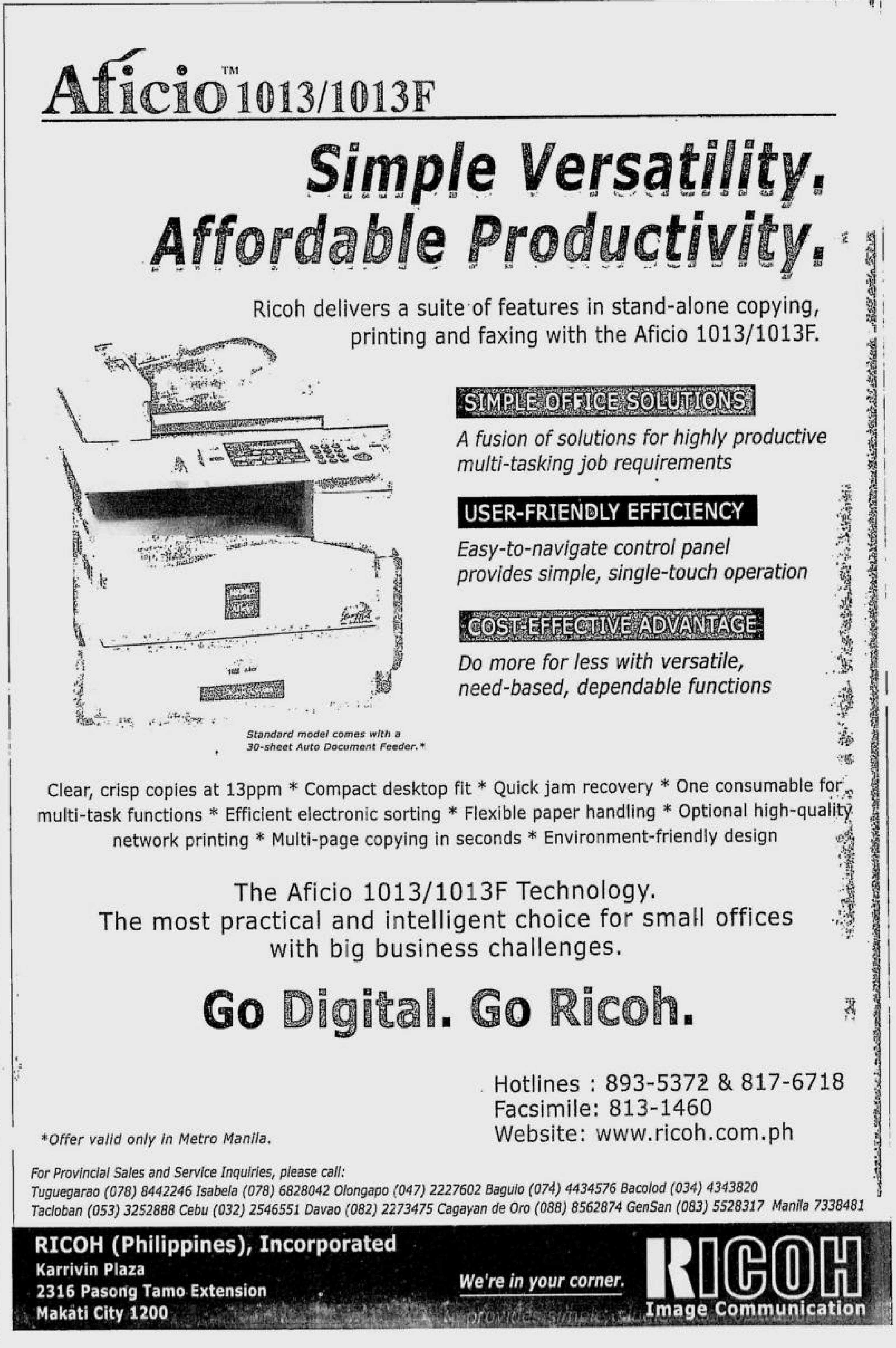

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When Marian image smiles, a miracle follows

By Leila Salaverria

FOR 50 years, a two-and-a-half-foot tall image of the Our Lady of Fatima has been showering blessings on devotees in Mandaluyong.

It is for this reason that they endure the heat, brave the rain and wade through floods to maintain their half-century old tradition of bringing the image to a different house every week and praying the rosary to it everyday, which they call their "block rosary devotion."

The devotees comprise the Our Lady of Fatima Guild, who swear that the image of the Virgin Mary is "miraculous," and provides abundant blessings to those who believe.

Norma Lim, the incoming *hermana* of the guild and its member for 25 years, says she credits her good fortune to the help that the Blessed Mother gave her because of her devotion.

From having close to nothing, Lim now has various businesses and is able to provide for her family well.

Adi Flores, on the other hand, says she has learned that the Virgin Mary will always help you in times of need.

She recalls that when she accepted the post of *hermana* several years back, she had no way of knowing how to deal with her duties, financial and otherwise. But with the Blessed Mother, all the assistance and all the help she needed at the time came just when she needed them.

Members of the guild say the Lady of Fatima has been good to them, which is why they struggle to maintain their block rosary devotion.

"We'd bring the image to a house and go there to pray, even if the flood was up to here," Lim says, pointing to an area just below her chest.

Dr. Adela Franco, one of the guild's 10 remaining original members, adds that there was no week in the guild's 50 years that the image was not transferred to a new home, and no day when the members did not pray the rosary to the image.

Of course, they did not mind the effort; for them there was fulfillment in their acts. Like what the Lady of Fatima promised, their prayers brought them peace.

So intense are the guild members' belief in the Blessed Virgin that they say they know when she will grant their prayers or not.

"If you pray to her and she's smiling, then you can expect your prayer to be answered," says Flores. "But if she's not, then you better think about what you just asked for."

Other guild members also claim to seeing the image smile when it "feels welcome" in a household, or lose the cheery expression when the image feels the homeowners do not receive her with open hearts.

The Lady of Fatima, which now has a 36-year-old chapel on P. Cruz Sreet in Mandaluyong City, is also the guild's inspiration for their numerous outreach and catechism programs yearly. They buy canned goods, fruits, rice and other staples and give them to needy families who flock to guild members' areas during Christmas time.

They also work to spread their beliefs. In fact, two other images have been donated to Barrio San Jose, a less than well-off area in Mandaluyong, by members of the guild, and they lead residents in prayer there.

For the guild members, giving back to the needy is their way of thanking the Lady of Fatima for the blessings they have received.

It was in 1953 when the Virgin Mary's devotees decided to have an image of the Lady of Fatima made.

The guild's original 20 members chipped in P20 each to have noted sculptor Maximo Vicente make a wooden image of the blessed virgin, which they prayed to daily.

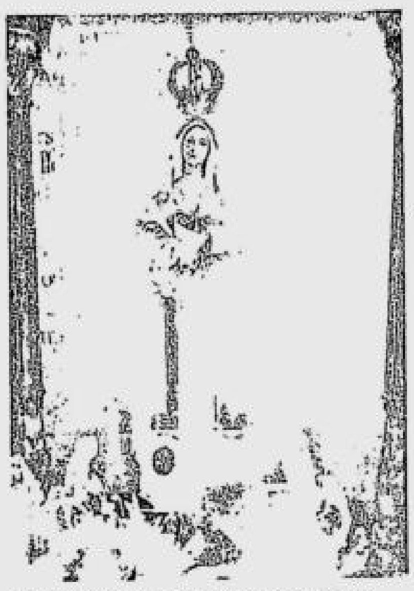
In 1966, Marian devotee Judge Delia Medina decided to build a chapel in the Lady of Fatima's honor upon the instruction of their parish priest, despite funding problems.

But as devotees know, the blessed mother will provide. That same year, Medina, who was then a lawyer, was made to represent a couple who were the sole beneficiaries of American philanthropist Elsie Gaches' fortune. When the couple won their court case, they gave Medina a substantial fee as payment for her services. Thus, Medina was able to finance the construction of the chapel.

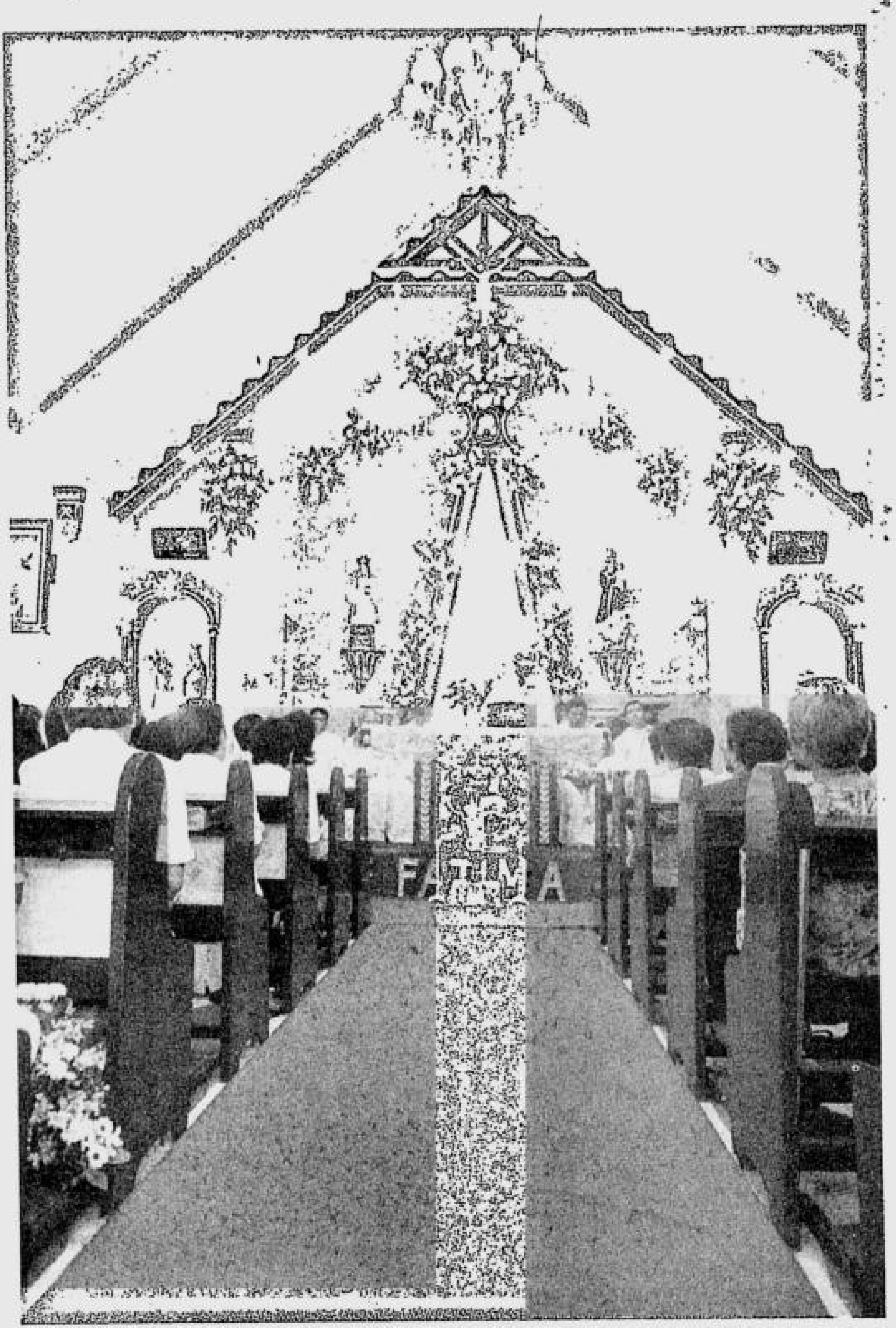
But this "miracle" was not the last the devotees saw. A year later, Medina was hard pressed to find a statue of the Fatima to house in the chapel because the one she had ordered from Portugal was late in coming. A few days before the chapel's inauguration, she did all she could to find a replacement but failed several times. But a day before the inauguration, she saw an advertisement for an auction sale of properties belonging to a seminary and there found a five-foot tall statue of the Lady of Fatima.

These miracles were only the beginning. The Mandaluyong devotees would later experience the blessings that the Lady of Fatima showered them with.

On May 13, the Our Lady of Fatima Chapel commemorated the golden anniversary of the block rosary devotion. Mass and festivities were held. But more than these, they also gave thanks to half a century of blessings that had marked their life of devotion.



THE MIRACULOUS image of Our Lady of Fatima JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN



THE 36-YEAR-OLD chapel on P. Cruz Street in Mandaluyong City is home to Our Lady Of Fatima. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

You're not king of the road, BF warns drivers of armored vans

By Christian Esguerra

THE METRO Manila Development Authority is bent on becoming "King of the Road."

MMDA chair Bayani Fernando yesterday said he would now go after abusive drivers of armored vehicles transporting money after he had disciplined jeepney and bus drivers.

"They're just like any other vehicle," he told the INQUIRER. "They're not exempted from traffic policies."

Fernando has instructed MMDA personnel to apprehend armored cars that usually drive in convoy through traffic to elude possible robbers.

He said these vehicles do not have the same privilege extended to ambulances, fire trucks and police cars.

"Their business is not a matter of life and death," Fernando said. "They are armored precisely to protect them from hijackers. Driving fast and defying traffic rules is already an overkill."

But traffic enforcers have been told to be more cautious in dealing with occupants of armored vans, Fernando said.

He said these vehicles are usually manned by heavily armed security guards instructed never to alight until they have reached their destination.

"We don't want to have any violent confrontation," Fernando said, recalling an incident when he was still Marikina mayor.

He said his men had accosted an armored carrier for violating traffic rules. Its driver and his armed companions refused to alight from the van and sign the violation ticket, prompting the officers to tow the vehicle with the occupants on board.

They got out of the vehicle only after their boss arrived at the impounding area, Fernando said.

Search is on for outstanding cooperatives

THE SEARCH is on for outstanding cooperatives that have joined hands with local governments in implementing social and economic development projects in local communities.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. is spearheading the Cooperative-LGU Partnership Award (CLPA), in collaboration with six government agencies and academic institutions.

Awards will be given to the outstanding cooperatives in three categories—partnership with a provincial government, partnership with a city government and partnership with a municipal government.

Winners for each category will receive a cash grant of P100,000 and a plaque of recognition at the Senate Building in July 2003.

The awards project aims to encourage cooperatives and LGUs to be innovative and creative in promoting community building and local development.

"It seeks to recognize the achievements of cooperatives that have linked up with local governments in implementing projects that contributed to the improvement in the quality of life in local communities," said Pimentel, principal author of the Local Government Code and the Cooperative Code.

Aside from Pimentel's office, other organizers of the Coop-LGU Partnership Awards are the UP National College of Public Administration and Governance, UP Center for Local and Regional Governance, PUP Institute of Cooperatives, and the Cooperative Development Authority. Deadline for the submission of nomination is on May 31.

PEACE-BUILDING SENDOFF
Rev. Luke Shrock-Hurst (left), of the Mennonite Central Committee Philippines, and Ed Martin (center), area director for MMC's Central Asia and South Programs, discuss the fellowship of Saeed A. Daof (right) at Eastern University's Summer Peace-building Institute. Daof is being sponsored by MCC to take courses in Conflict Transformation and Peace-building at the EMU institute in Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Drowned man threatens water supply

From page A21

five meters from the wall of a house that encroaches into the 60-meter MWSS right-of-way, where two air ventilation chambers are located.

Diaz and his companions were in the backyard of this house on Bignay Street to pick fruits at about 2:45 p.m.

He was seen hopping from the two-meter high concrete chamber to the rooftop of an adjacent building.

But on his third jump, Diaz fell into the ventilation chamber when the concrete slab that covered it collapsed. He was swept away by the strong water current in the mainline.

Marquez chafes over 'executioner' posters

By Christian Esguerra

ENEMIES of Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez have flooded the city with posters calling him an executioner.

The posters are plastered all over Baclaran supposedly in response to the mayor's support of the Metropolitan Manila Development. Authority's campaign against illegal vendors there.

Marquez has accused his political opponents of using the vendors to spoil his plans for the 2004 local elections, where he is planning to run for the city's lone congressional seat. He is now serving his third term as mayor.

Marquez is grooming Vice Mayor Jun Bernabe to be his successor.

"There's definitely more to this than the vendor issue," he told the INQUIRER. "My opponents are out to destroy me."

He was quick to blame former Mayor Pablo Olivarez who already announced his plan to run for mayor in 2004.

Actress Alma Moreno, Marquez's estranged wife, is also running for the post.

Marquez claimed Olivarez might have funded the posters after he pressured the ex-mayor to pay more than P41 million in real property taxes early this month.

The INQUIRER could not reach Olivarez for comment.

Marquez said vendors should blame the MMDA and not the local government for the intensive sidewalk-clearing operations in Baclaran.

"I'm just supporting the MMDA campaign," he said.

Hundreds of vendors have lost their space at the perennially congested streets around the Redemptorist Church since the MMDA began its drive against illegal vendors.

They were offered stalls at nearby shopping malls but others opted to stay in the streets.

MARQUEZ

METROBRIEFS

Murder reenactment

THE PARAÑAQUE police today will reenact the slaying of Japanese businessman Hiromasa Murakami to look for "fresh angles" into the incident. Parañaque police chief Supt. Roland Estilles on Saturday said that they have learned from Japanese Embassy officials in Manila that Murakami had no enemies in Japan and thus could not have been the target of the dreaded Yakuza Gang, as Murakami's son Artemio, an amateur golf champion, had claimed. Murakami was stabbed and shot dead as he slept beside his wife Carmelita in their Parañaque home two weeks ago. *Leila Salaverria*

In praise of an honest cop

INTERIOR Secrectary Joey Lina praised a Quezon City cop over the radio on Saturday for turning over to authorities some P300,000 in cash two weeks ago. Police believe that the robbers had left the cash, which was found in a vacant lot in Barangay Commonwealth, Quezon City, during their escape. Lina had invited Senior Insp. Alberto Malasa of the Central Police District to his radio program at DZMM, to personally commend the officer. Malasa said he received a tip through text messaging about a bag that was thrown away in haste. When Malasa checked it out, it was full of "old money" amounting to P329,000. Malasa later turned over the money to the office of Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte. *Luige del Puerto*

7 men rape girl, 14

SEVEN young men were arrested in Taguig on Friday for raping a 14-year-old girl during a drinking spree. Suspects Mark Anthony Aguas, 18, Dick Rubang, 19, Gregorio Morales, 19, Leonard Bejo, 19, Rocky Tablang, 21, Rio Obeto, 21, and Mario Tapalla, 21, accompanied the victim to Morales' house in Katipunan Village, Western Bicutan, where they had a drinking session. Sometime during the night, the victim felt dizzy and was taken to a room, where the suspects took turns in raping her, police said. The victim told police that her boyfriend, Aguas, was not with the group and did not force her to sleep with him. But police said they could not yet clear Aguas over the incident. *Khristina Villanueva*

Man shot to death in Tondo

DRIVER Roel Aquisap, 35, was shot to death by two unidentified men while he was drinking with his friends in Tondo, Manila early Friday night. PO3 Rodel Lingcong, homicide investigator, said Aquisap, of Pandacan, Manila, was drinking with his friends at the Parola Compound in Tondo when the suspects approached them at around 7:45 p.m. The victim reportedly offered the suspects some beer, but the gunmen pulled out their .45-caliber pistols and shot him point-blank. Aquisap died on the spot, police said. *Jerome Aning*

Mystery in Malabon

POLICE are puzzled over the death of businessman Rolando Osorio, 59, in Malabon City Thursday night. Osorio's wife found the victim's remains in one of the rooms of their four-storey house on Asuzena Street, Longos. Police learned that at around 9:30 p.m., Osorio's wife was at the master's bedroom when she heard a noise in the next room. She told police that when she went to the other room, she saw her husband on the floor with bullet wounds. With her son Gil, 25, they took Osorio to the Manila Central University Hospital where the victim later died. When police checked Osorios' house, all traces of blood have been cleaned and the room put in order. *Tina Santos*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MS Vilma Santos, in a picture shot in mid-scream, gives Piolo Pascual (right) a hug and a cheer after he wins the Urian best supporting actor award. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Motorist robs man who fell off bike in Makati

AFTER messenger Ronnie Pabona met an accident while on board his motorcycle on Saturday afternoon in Makati, he had more bad luck.

An unidentified man alighted from his blue car at the scene of the accident. But instead of helping the injured Pabona, the man took 15 foreign magazines the victim was supposed to deliver, and sped off in his car.

Pabona, of Barangay San Antonio in Makati, was negotiating Buendia Avenue when he lost his balance and fell off his Kawasaki motorcycle in front of Zuellig Building at 2:45 p.m. Saturday, police said.

Barely able to stand because of a knee injury, the messenger was relieved when a man stopped his car (PKU-738) and walked up to him. But the man picked up the scattered magazines and left, Pabona told police. *C. Esguerra*

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Piolo scores grand slam with Urian

By Marinel Cruz

AS PREDICTED, dramatic actor Piolo Pascual on Saturday scored a grand slam as best supporting actor by winning the Gawad Urian during the 26th awards rites of the movie critics' group held at the Teatro Arturo Enrile in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

Pascual won for his role as the rebel Jules in Chito Rono's "Dekada '70"

This is his fifth best supporting actor award this year for the movie that also gave veteran actress Vilma Santos her 8th Gawad Urian best actress.

Pascual, 26, received his first acting nomination in 2000 for his role in Mel Chionglo's "Lagarista."

But his grand slam win this year has elevated him in the league of Santos, who swept all the best actress awards in 1989 for her role in "Relasyon," and Sharon Cuneta, who duplicated the feat in 1996 for her portrayal in the film "Madrasta."

Roño's socio-political blockbuster "Dekada '70" shared the best picture honors with Gil Portes' "Mga Munting Tinig," a low-budget film about the heartbreaking experiences of a young teacher assigned to a far-flung barrio.

In his acceptance speech, Portes thanked the financiers of the project, which stars Alessandra de Rossi, and announced to the audience that the film's musical scorer Joy Marfil, had won a Fulbright Association scholarship even if she did not bag the Gawad Urian for her work in the film.

Marfil will take up music theory at the New York State University this July, according to Portes.

Co-winner Chito Roño was not present during the awards rites, and Star Cinema supervising producer Tess Fuentes accepted his trophy.

Screenwriter Lualhati Bautista, who won the Gawad Urian for best screenplay for "Dekada '70," was also absent from the ceremony.

Arthur Nicdao brought home another trophy for best production for his work in "Munting Tinig."

The biggest surprise that night was the choice for best actor, Jay Manalo ("Prosti"), who himself was dumbfounded when he was announced winner and stammered in his acceptance speech.

"I've waited for this award for 10 long years," said Manalo, who was also nominated as best supporting actor for his work in "Mano Po."

"I dedicate this to my children and to my fellow best actor nominees," he said.

Manalo bested veteran actors like Ricky Davao ("American Adobo"), Christopher de Leon ("Dekada '70"), Rudy Fernandez ("Diskarte") and Aga Muhlach ("Kailangan Kita") in the best actor category.

Star Cinema's "Kailangan Kita" brought home only one award out of its seven nominations when Shayne Clemente was named best in cinematography.

The Gawad Urian for best sound went to Audio Media for its work on Imus Production's "Alamat ng Agimat."

Francis Vinarao and Tony Cortez won for best editing and best musical score for Reflection Films' "Diskarte."

Critically acclaimed writer Ricardo "Ricky" Lee is this year's recipient of the Gawad Urian for lifetime achievement.

Rep. Biazon launches innovative technology program for Muntinlupa public elementary schools

Alarmed at the poor performance of learners in the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics and wanting to make public schools in the city one hundred percent information technology capable, Congressman Rozzano Rufino B. Biazon has launched the Technoloogy Intensified Instruction (Tii) Program in all of the 15 public elementary schools in Muntinlupa.

Believing that enhancing information technology goes beyond merely providing hardware, Rep. Biazon initiated the innovative project that makes use of technology in the teaching of basic subject areas. The Tii Program will be carried out in all public elementary schools of Muntinlupa City, earning for the city the honor and distinction of being the first city in the country to make use, division-wide, of this technology-enriched instructional system. The objective of the program is to improve learning performance in reading, writing and mathematics through the station learning approach and the use of computers.

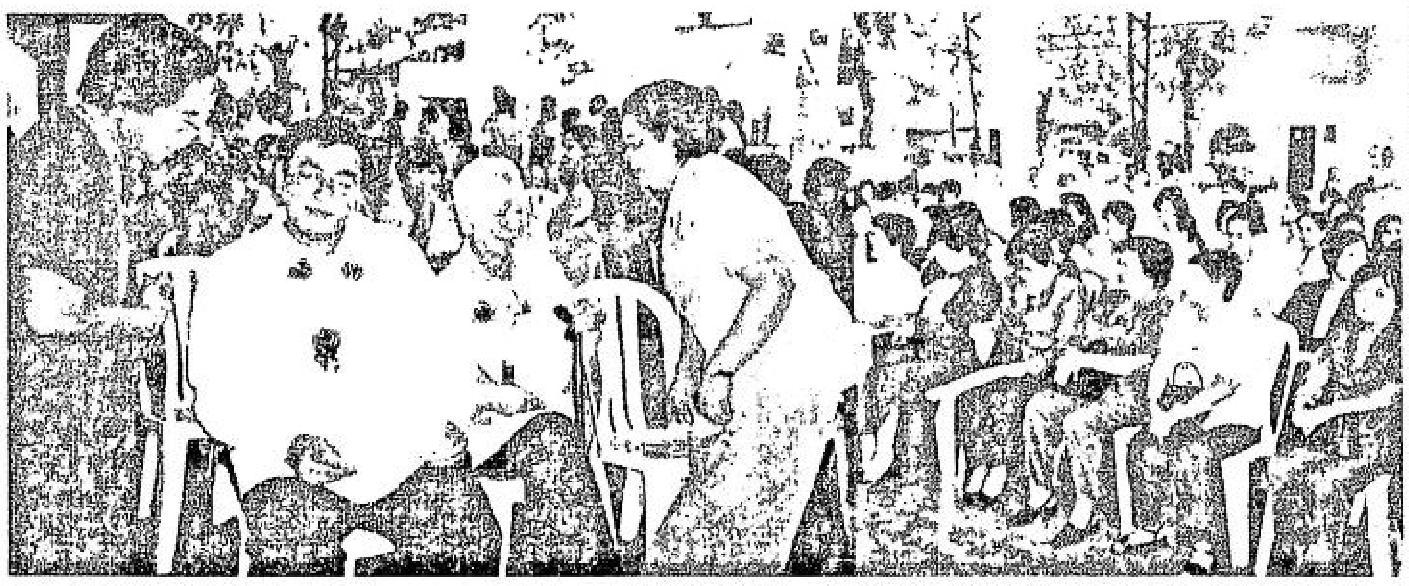
Muntinlupa holds the distinction of being the first city in the country to successfully carry out, division-wide, the Technology Intensified Instruction Program for reading, writing and mathematics

Under the Tii Program as envisioned by Rep. Biazon, each public elementary school in Muntinlupa will have a resource-rich classroom for reading, writing and mathematics with at least two computers, a printer and curriculum-based software.

"I want to achieve 100 percent computer literacy among teachers in Muntinlupa public schools and produce 100 percent computer literate and competent graduates of these schools," said the Congressman.

The Tii Program starts the computer education of students at a younger age. The use of computer software, modules, teaching and testing materials packaged in an interesting and fun way will improve the learning and competency of students, he added.

"The road to fulfillment of my dream for Muntinlupa is still long and winding. Reality tells me that while I am committed to this goal, I need the commitment and cooperation of a lot of people. In this instance, I take the opportunity to commend my partners--EDUVISION 2000, Inc. and the Division of City School--in the upliftment of IT education in my district," Congressman Biazon said.



School officials attend to Rep. Biazon (second from left) during the Tii Graduation at Alabang Elementary School last March.

Rep. Biazon and his father, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, have provided funds for the Tii program through their Countrywide Development Fund.

Ostensibly, the schools division, headed by Dr. Aurora Gervacio, schools superintendent, is ready for the implementation of the Tii program. Recently, close to 100 teachers and 15 principals, together with English and Mathematics supervisors of the Division of Muntinlupa, undertook an intensive 25-day training covering a broad range of topics—from basic technology skills to developing instructional materials and using technology to teach the basic subject areas. The training was conducted by EDUVISION 2000 with the trainors coming from the Ateneo and the University of the Philippines.

It is not only teachers and other school officials who will be oriented on the innovative features of the Tii program. Parents will also be involved in the program, affording them the opportunity to see for themselves how their children are doing in class through the passport or work logs which the students will bring home from time to time. This early, some parents, probably in support of the program, have favorably responded to requests for donations to maintain the Tii classroom. The participating schools will put up the classrooms and will provide for maintenance and the raw materials for the various learning aids. Parents may donate tables, cabinets, dividers, books and other classroom needs.

The Tii program has been well received by the city. Various educators from the Division of Muntinlupa have nothing but praise for the program.

"This project will help intensify basic skills instruction through the use of Station Learning Approach. With Tii, you can boost text-based instruction by integrating effective computer software and hands-on learning," says Dr. Herminia Arancillo, principal of Sucat Elementary School. Dr. Arancillo also feels that the program will motivate teachers, stimulate learning among the students, and improve school and community relations since the parents will be actively involved in it.

Mrs. Clarita Alejandro, principal of the Bagong Silang Elementary School, says the Tii program uses "techniques or strategies to get the pupil's attention. We are very happy and thankful to Rep. Ruffy Biazon because we are the only division right now where all the elementary schools are participating in the Tii program," she says.

Ma. Lourdes Cretencio, an English teacher, believes that the Tii program will help improve the teaching and learning process because the pupils will know how to make use of computers and CDs. "The program will also make them more independent," she adds.

Mr. Isagani Briones, another English teacher, says the Tii program will help improve learning performance of the pupils "because it's very innovative and aims to develop not only cognitive development but also physical, psychological and sociological development."

Dr. Rosita Gonzales, principal of Bayanan Elementary School (Main), says the Tii program will enable the pupils to be globally competitive with the schoolchildren of other countries.

A Grade V English teacher, Mrs. Ma. Theresa C. de la Rosa, feels that the program will help intensify basic skills instruction through an active learning station approach. It will also motivate even reluctant learners by offering them stimulating activities .

Dr. Belen Garcia, principal of Muntinlupa Elementary School, spells out the mechanics of the Tii program. "The practice is teaching the pupils through learning stations. It's a different set-up, not a regular classroom instruction because, instead of a lock-step instruction where the teacher dispenses all the information, the children perform varied and interesting activities in different learning stations. The approach teaches the students to be independent learners."

Dr. Gervacio, on the other hand, says that with the training that they have undertaken, the teachers will be better motivated.

Dr. Concesa Faustino, English supervisor, says the Tii program is built in the same principle of cooperative learning and this is being accomplished through learning stations by teamwork, hands on experience and at the same time attain objectives as planned by the teacher.

"The teachers act as facilitators instead of talking to pupils. The pupils, on the other hand, discover new things for themselves and develop skills in communication and independent learning," she says.

Without doubt, the project of Congressman Biazon in Muntinlupa lessens the burden on the Department of Education to provide for the teacher training and instructional material needs of the city in the implementation of the re-structured basic education curriculum. It would be worthwhile monitoring the progress of the learners in Muntinlupa in reading, writing and mathematics in the new curriculum with Tii in place.

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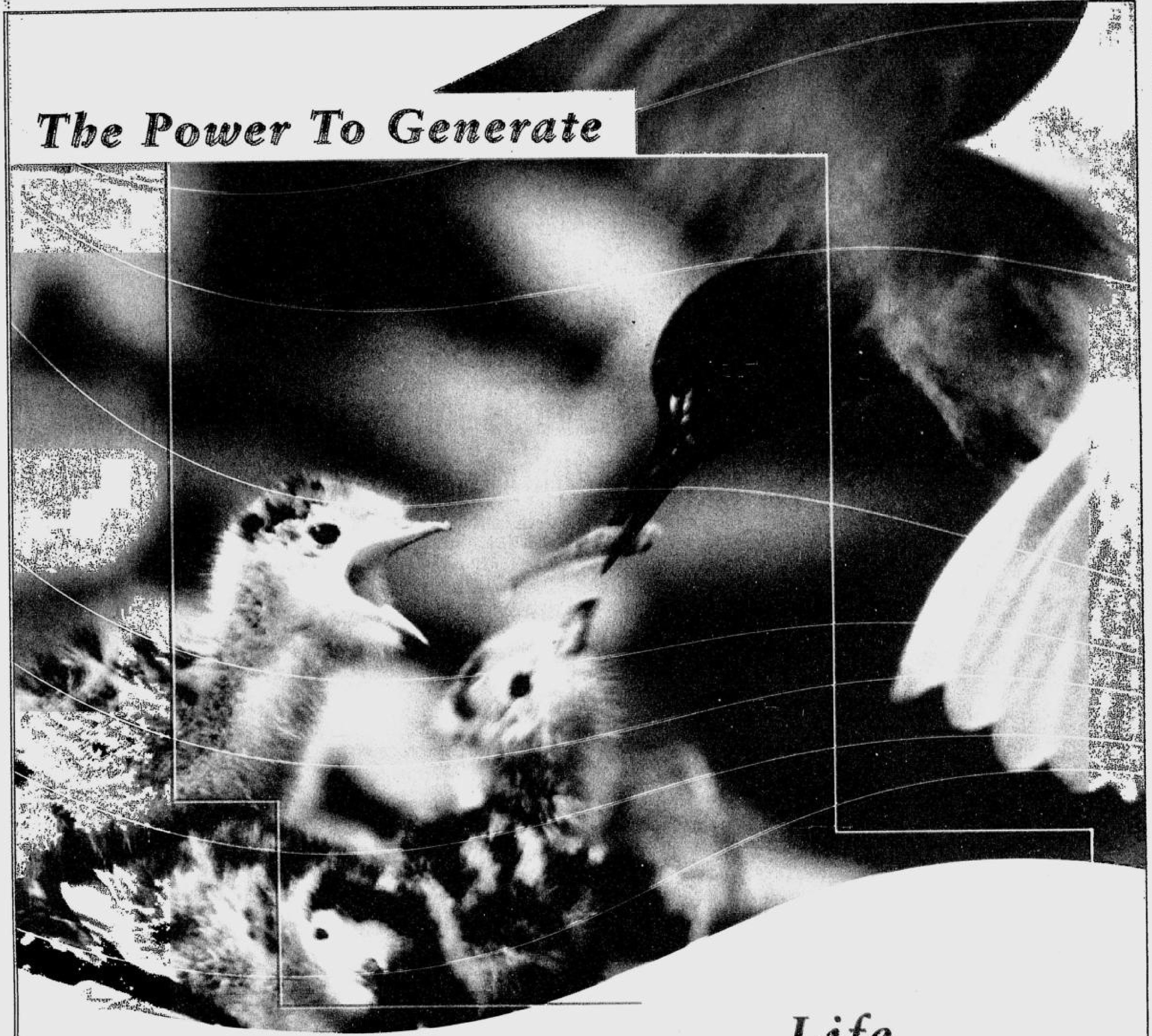

Life

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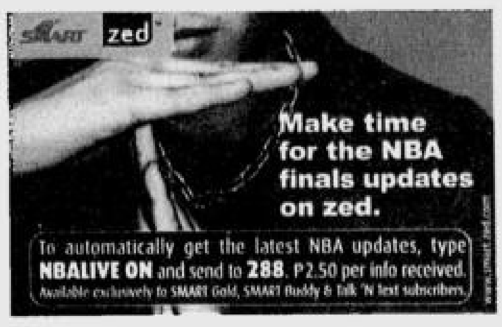
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Lerio stops foe, bags bantam gold

KAUNAS, Lithuania—Sydney Olympian Arlan Lerio yesterday kept the Philippine flag proudly flying after stopping Chacigov Chavazi of Belarus in the second round to win the bantamweight (54-kg) title of the 7th A. Socikas International boxing tournament here.

Lerio, who is blazing the comeback trail, decked the Belarus fighter with a thunderous left hook to the face in the second round, prompting the referee to stop the fight.

Back in the national pool after a two-year absence, Lerio was also adjudged the best fighter of the tournament sanctioned by the International Amateur Boxing Association and which drew entries from 14 nations.

Harry Tanamor, silver medalist in the Busan Asian Games, wasn't as lucky, however. He broke the nose of hometown bet Ivan Stopavic but emerged loser, 5-8, in the flyweight (51-kg) final.

Lithuania went on to win the overall title with seven golds. Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and the Philippines went home with one gold apiece.

Looking for his third international title after winning in Azerbaijan and Greece last year, Tanamor was clearly in command against Stopavic.

The Filipino fighter rocked Stopavic with body blows throughout the match, but failed to impress the judges.

Stopavic also received help from the referee, who stopped the bout four times so the Lithuanian fighter can rest.

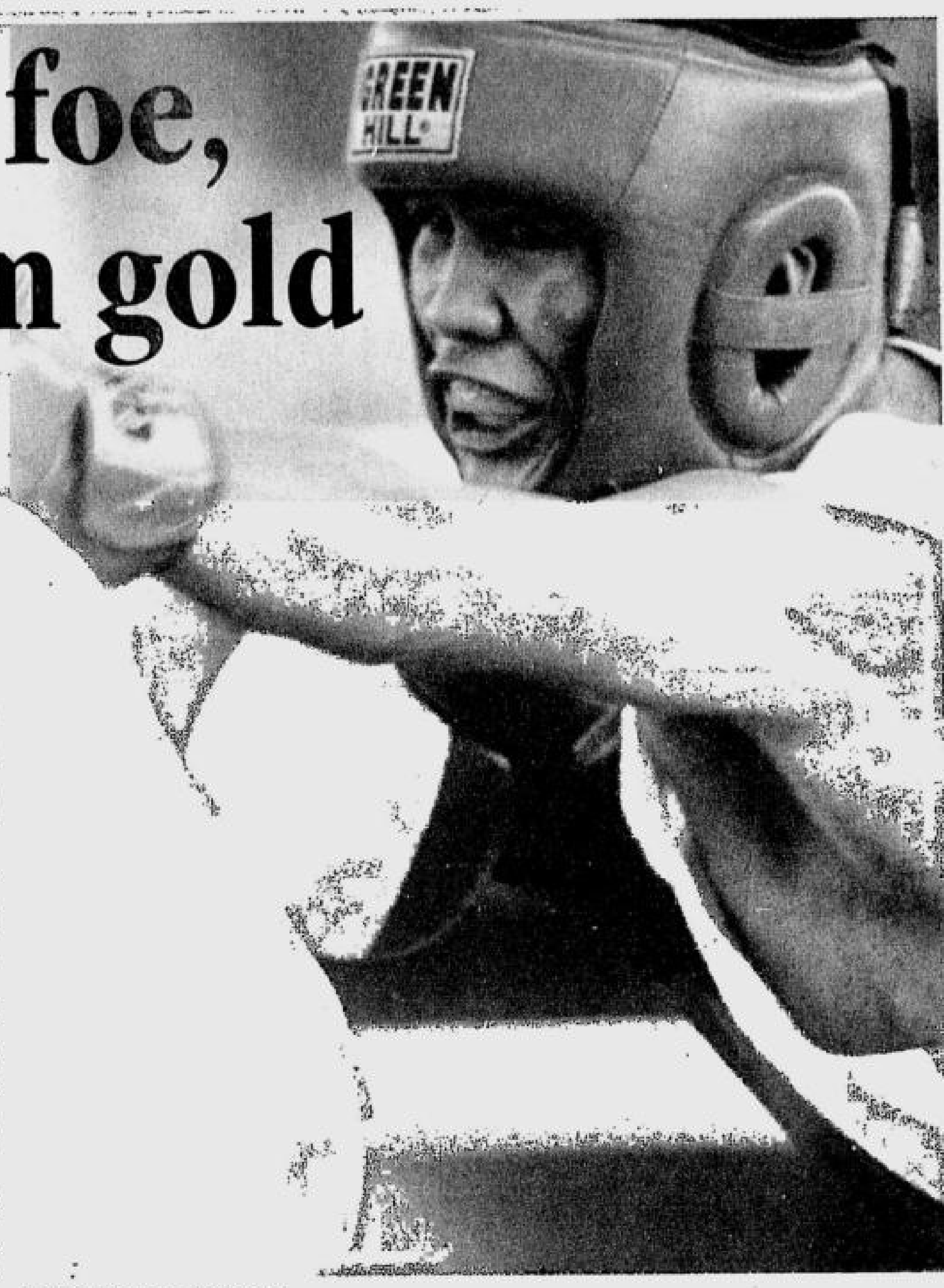
It was the second time that Stopavic had prevailed over a Filipino bet. Violito Payla, another Olympic hopeful, also lost to Stopavic in an international tournament last year.

Regarded as the country's brightest bet for an Olympic gold, the 24-year-old Tanamor downed Zmaicik Sergej of Belarus, 28-14, in the semifinals.

Lerio entered the finals by beating Slovenia's Roman Durina, 16-8.

Jenebert Pasadre and Esmael Bacongon earlier settled for the bronze medal in the (featherweight) 57-kg and (light welter) 61-kg categories, respectively.

The Filipinos will proceed to Sevilla, Spain, for the BoxAm International Tournament and then to Greece for the Acropolis Cup from May 28 to June 2.



LERIO: Comeback victory.

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Django blows $15,000 payoff

FRANCISCO "Django" Bustamante blew a $15,000 (about P780,000) payoff when he dropped a close 7-6 decision to Ralf "The Kaiser" Souquet of Germany in their Billiards Congress of America 9-Ball Championship final at the Riviera Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas late Saturday.

As described by the AzBilliards website, Bustamante, 39, managed to put up a worthy challenge until he missed a ball in the final game. Souquet pounced on the opportunity to score a cleanup, win the game and secure the victory.

Bustamante had his back against the wall after he lost Game 10, allowing Souquet to inch closer to victory with a 6-4 lead.

But Bustamante was not just about to give up as the Filipino star took Games 11 and 12 to draw level again.

There was no mention of how much Bustamante, the 2002 AZ Billiards Player of the Year, won but the runner-up finish continued his big season. He already had posted back-to-back wins in the Joss NE Tour stops 17 and 18, wound up third in the Mid-Atlantic 9- Ball Championship and the opening leg of the San Miguel Beer Asian 9-ball Championship and placed fourth in the Ten-Ball Challenge at Trump Marina.

On his way to the finals, Bustamante had beaten top favorite Johnny Archer, Neils Feijen, Max Eberle and Souquet himself 11-10.

The 34-year-old Souquet, who is best remembered for his conquest of local hero Efren "Bata" Reyes for the World Pool Masters crown last year, notched his first victory this season.

The BCA 9-Ball attracted a 64-player field and it included Jose "Amang" Parica who lost in the early rounds.

Karen Corr defeated Allison Fisher for the women's title.

Jong Arcano

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Santillan decisions Thai in Cebu

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

LAPU-LAPU City—Former Oriental Pacific Boxing Federation welterweight champion Rev "Gentle Giant" Santillan hammered out a 10-round unanimous decision victory over Thai Sayan Chuwatana Saturday night in a card dubbed "Fists of the Giants" here.

The win boosted Santillan's hopes for a grudge rematch with Hiroshi Watanabe, who dethroned the Filipino via a highly controversial split decision last year.

The 25-year-old Iloilo-born Santillan, ranked No. 14 by the WBC, started strong and was never in danger against the light-punching Thai. Two judges favored Santillan with identical 100-90 scores and the third saw him winning by 100-95.

Santillan, now based in Cebu and fighting under the Wakee Salud stable, raised his win-loss-draw record to 15-1-1, with 12 KO's.

In the main supporting bout, International Pharmaceuticals Inc-backed Alex Egina registered his biggest win so far as he eked out a split decision verdict over RP no. 3 bantamweight Noel Sungahid.

Egina, the country's no. 2 junior bantam, is hoping to get a crack at the vacant RP 115-lb title soon.

Meanwhile, RP bantam champ Johnny Lear of the Sammy Gello-ani stable looked impressive in stopping top Japanese prospect Hisataka Ikemori in the third round of a scheduled tenner.

Unbeaten champions fight to a draw

PITTSBURGH, Pennsylvania—Unbeaten world lightweight boxing champions Leonard Dorin of Romania and Paul Sapdafora of the United States fought to a draw here Saturday in what was to be a unification showdown.

It was the first pro draw for both hometown hero Spadafora, the southpaw International Boxing Federation champion who entered 36-0, and Dorin, the World Boxing Association champion who won his prior 21 pro starts.

Panamanian judge Jorge Perez Pineda scored Spadafora a 115-114 winner while US judge Pat Russell had Dorin ahead 115-113. Another American judge, Gary Merritt, scored the bout a 114-114 draw so each man kept his crown.

It was the 10th title defense for Spadafora, 27, who wants a quick rematch.

Dorin, 33, an Olympic bronze medalist at the 1992 and 1996 Olympics and who lives in Montreal, was willing to face Spadafora again, although he wanted the next fight in his hometown of Bucharest. *AFP*

You don't need a gun

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

HE said he teaches self-defense. The info was a jolter. It came as a complete surprise.

You see, this friend of mine, a regular in Mon Tulfo's past birthdays, had never struck me as mean machine.

First time I saw him in a casual black suit, he appeared very much like a visiting artist, a singer or a middle-aged impresario.

He was cool, composed, dignified. If he's a car, he would have been a black, smooth, well-polished Rolls-Royce.

He sat there observing, staring at his salad, quietly sipping wine, French as a Frenchman could be.

He hardly spoke, and if he ever did, it was in a quiet, sing-song manner, as though he was baring a secret.

***

Anyway, the few times we had been seated around one table in Mon's succeeding parties, either at the Shangri-la Restaurant off West Ave. or the Seafood Palace at the Sheraton, I never heard him say a single word about martial arts, or on any thing related to manly combat.

In fact, I had been extremely puzzled, I nearly lost my borrowed cool when he once asked me a strange question.

He wondered, softly of course, if I happen to write my own columns.

Realizing my discomfort, he wasted no time explaining, after I had answered in the positive, that it was meant as a compliment.

***

Repeat: when I first met Frenchman John Havan, I never read the hint of a dangerous man in the guy.

He was the sort who, pardon the cliche, could not hurt a fly.

Then he sent me this note last week: "I am teaching a self-defense class for adults at the Makati YMCA and wondered if you could say a few good words about it in your column."

I asked him to say what should be said instead. Listen: "The law and order situation is breaking down, crime is on the rise, the rich-poor gap yawns ever wider. Things are getting worse in the streets and criminals are getting bolder. The average 9-to-5 wage earner is in greater danger of being attacked outside his home today than ever before.

"Most people don't own guns, don't know how to fight with knives, don't know how to box, wrestle or fight with their fists.

Their professional, social and family obligations leave them little time to study martial arts or work out with weights. These take years and can help little when confronted by a hoodlum with a bolo in his hand in a dark street late at night.

"The first three seconds of an attack are the most dangerous. Counter Strike teaches you how to survive those first three seconds, switch roles with the attacker, take him down.

"Counter Strike is a short, practical self-defense course that focuses on the basics, and it is available at the Makati YMCA. It is a first in the Philippines, and is introduced by its founder, a Frenchman named John Havan.

"Students don't have to be in tip-top physical shape. They train in their everyday clothes, wearing shoes. They learn to defend themselves against one or many attackers, some empty-handed, some with weapons."

Classes are from 6:30-8 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and 5:30-7 p.m. on Saturdays. The venue is 7 Sacred Heart Plaza, San Antonio Village, Makati (just off Kamagong Street). A course lasts three months (36 lessons), at the rate of 12 lessons a month. Each lesson is 90 minutes. Tuition fee is P1,200, payable monthly (20 percent discount for three months down). Interested parties can contact Mr. Havan at 825-9740 or email havan@pacific.net.ph

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W'Wack Class A champ

REIGNING national champion Heidi Chua and Stephanie Yu scored 39 points each in leading Wack Wack to a convincing win in Class A in the opening leg of the WGAP Circuit recently at the Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club course in Lipa, Batangas.

Wack Wack also drew big rounds from Eloisa Campos and Nena Nakpil who had 38 apiece to post a tournament-high 154 for a seven-point win over the fancied Manila Southwoods and Forest Hills.

Villamor and Alabang shared the spotlight with the revitalized Wack Wack ladies by bagging the Class B and Class C titles, respectively, in the first of eight events in the circuit calendar.

The next leg will be played on May 25 at Riviera.

Winning the individual titles were Masa Tsai of Forest Hills with her 40 points in Class A, Karen Buenaventura of Manila Golf with her tournament-best 45 in Class B and Jennifer Campos of Southwoods in Class C.

Villamor , behind Tina Yupangco, Minnie Jentes, Nancy Tsay and Tess Ngo, scored 148 to beat Alabang by three while Alabang's Te Villar, Tina Javellana, Harumi Kittainu, Ofelia Carlos and Olive Pangilinan, combined for 150 to beat Sta. Elena by eight.

SPORTSWATCH

CHAMPION SQUAD
The NutraSweet Team, composed of (2nd from left) Bobby Inigo, Dennis Valdes and Arsenic Laurel (right) garnered the lowest gross score at the Coca-Cola Golf Classic recently at the Riviera Golf & Country Club. The trio are shown receiving their trophies from Coca-Cola Foundation vice chair Jim Harting (left) and chair Jesus Celdran. Proceeds of the event went to the Little Red Schoolhouse project which is building 25 schoolhouses in the country this year. NutraSweet is the sweetener in Coke Light.

Eagle Ridge invt'l meet slated

OSCAR Ordinario will try his luck with new guest partner Peter Pancho when he tries to defend his title in the third Eagle Ridge Invitational golf tournament slated May 23-25 at the Dye and Faldo courses of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Counry Club in General Trias, Cavite. Ordinario, who won last year in tandem with Sta. Maria, and Pancho will be leading a field of about 240 teams seeing action in the 36-hole event which has drawn the support of Callaway, Ford-Edsa and Alsons Insurance as major sponsors. The other sponsors are GG&A Club Development Inc., Microtel-Eagle Ridge, Aqua Dyne Drilling Inc., G-Shop Inc., Sta. Lucia Golf Cart Corp., JRICO Trade Investment and Mandarin Hotel. Inquiries may be coursed through the tournament office at 046-4192843.

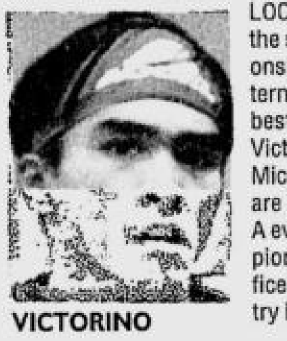
Mayor, Enriquez pace chessfest

DEFENDING champion Jenny Mayor and Adler Enriquez showed the way in their respective sections after two legs of the 2003 Philippine Executive Active Chess Express or PEACE 2003. Mayor leads the Elite field with 35 points, a point ahead of second-running Tyrone Guya of Nippon Life going into the third leg on May 31 at the Land Bank Plaza in Malate, Manila. Enriquez has 38 points in the Classic section, enjoying a four-point lead over Ramil Acosta. Peace 2003 is being organized by the Active Chess Center of Asia Inc (Acca) with the support of Belgosa Media Systems and Land Bank. For details, call 892-8759 or email acca@info.com.ph.

Huge field joins Cebu Challenge

CEBU's best local riders flex their muscles when they compete in the Osaka-Rudy Project Challenge which ends on May 25. Some 300 players including top-rated Jojo Cortes, Niño Surban, Noel Famor and Julius Regis will battle it out in the premier open expert division of this event that offers a total cash pot of P100,000. Jonathan Guardo of the sponsoring Osaka Iridology Inc. said the kickoff leg last Sunday and yesterday's second stage drew huge attention from local folk in Guadalupe. The succeeding leg on May 25 is slated in Mandaue. Guardo, also the chair of the Cebu City Sports Commission, is a participant himself as he sees action in the executives division. The series is supported by Arthro, Nature's Spring, Dot Sports, Guardosoft and Guardo Shiatzu.

Tennis big guns head Open cast



VICTORINO

LOCAL tennis gets a big boost this summer with the staging of the Coca-Cola Tennis Open Championships from May 25 to June 1 at the Subic Bay International Tennis and Sports Center. The country's best players led by defending champion Joseph Victorino, RP Davis Cuppers Johnny Arcilla, Michael Mora III, Rolando Ruel and Adelo Abadia are joining the meet. The Philta-sanctioned Group A event is offering 600 points to the singles champion. Registration is now ongoing at the Philta office (525-6434). Entry fee is P500. Deadline of entry is on May 22.

3-day darts championship set

RANKING Filipino darters will test their mettle in the three-day 2003 Philmasters Darts championship starting May 30 at the Pearl Billiards and Darts Center in Parañaque City. The tournament, sponsored by San Miguel Corp. is one of the four major national darts championships to choose members of the Philippine team for the World Cup XIV in Epinal, France, in September this year. The Philippines is ranked 8th in the forthcoming World Cup due to its impressive performance in last year's 11th Asia-Pacific Cup Darts Championship in Bangkok, Thailand.

Cage clinic Visayas swing resumes

THE NATIONWIDE search for the tallest athletic Filipino youngsters dubbed "Tuklas Taas" will be held at the Iloilo Sports Complex on May 20 and 21 as it continues its Visayan swing. Previously, the project backed by Burlington, San Miguel Corp., Fab, Dunlop-Slazenger, Sportshouse, LA Gear, Puma and Bally socks, has visited Angeles, Dagupan, Baguio, Tuguegarao, Naga and Lucena in Luzon where hundreds of boys 17 years and below showed up for the tryouts conducted by coaches from the Basketball Association of the Phils. Those chosen will be part of the national youth training pool which will be the core group for the RP-Burlington team to the SEABA Junior Championship 2004. For inquiries, please call the BAP regional directors or TEAM at 894-35-76.

Mandaluyong hosts 'Arnis Master'

ONE of the most awaited cockfests at Mandaluyong Coliseum will be held on Tuesday and Thursday (May 20 and 22) as well-liked sportsman Raymond Velayo presents the "11th Ucap Arnis Master 7-Cock Derby." Sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Washout Shampoo from Lakpue Drug. More than 60 fights are scheduled on Tuesday. Action starts promptly at 4 p.m. Participants must submit their entries tomorrow, Monday, May 19, from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. and may contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

Former archery champ passes away

FRANCISCO Naranjilla Jr., many-time national champion and the first Filipino archer to compete in the Olympic Games, died recently. He was 70. Naranjilla left behind his wife Leonarda, a doctor, and children Daniel, Jose, Francisco III, Raymund and Leonard. Naranjilla, who saw action in the 1972 Munich Olympic Games, held no less thhan eight national records from 1963 to 1077. He also competed in two world championships–in 1965 in Sweden and in 1971 in New York, England. Naranjilla was the first Filipino to win the Spanish trophy "Cruz de la Victoria" in the Trofeo Rey Pelayo international postal match. He was also named archer of the year three times (1965, 1971 and 1973).

Falcons hand Knights first loss

RICHARD Alonzo topscored with 21 points and rookie Kenneth Bono added 16, as Adamson University dealt Letran College its first loss in an 84-71 win in the 3rd Ambrosio Padilla Cup at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum. It was the Falcons third win in a row, while the Knights absorbed their first loss in the month-long tournament supported by Burlington, Cebuana Lhuillier, Healthy Options and Molten, the official ball. Despite the loss, Letran remained at the helm of Group B with a 5-1 (win-loss) card. Alonzo knocked in 13 points in the first half, while Bono exploded in the second half with 10.

GMA should raise toxic issue

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

DURING her state visit to the United States, many environmentalists are keeping their fingers crossed that President Macapagal-Arroyo would raise, one way or another, the issue of toxic waste with US President George W. Bush.

"It should be a topic for discussion. If she would ask for concessions from the US, one of these should be a comprehensive and total cleanup of the former bases (in particular the Subic Naval Base in Zambales and Clark Field Air Force Base in Pampanga) by the US government," said Von Hernandez, chair of the Peoples Task Force for Bases Cleanup and Greenpeace Asian toxic campaign coordinator.

In the past, former Presidents Fidel Ramos and Joseph Estrada had raised the toxic waste issue with their US counterparts, but they made little progress. American officials, according to Tonette Orejas of the PDI Central Luzon Desk, have asserted that the 1947 Philippine-US military bases agreement did not require environmental remediation. Last year in San Jose, California, the Filipino-American Coalition for Environmental Solutions (Faces) filed a multi-million dollar suit against the United States Air Force and Navy on behalf of 36 victims of alleged toxic waste contamination around Clark Field and Subic Bay. The lawsuit, said Faces lawyer Scott Allen, would test whether the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act also known as the Superfund Law can be applied to US facilities outside its borders.

I have been writing about the toxic waste issue, particularly the presence of hazardous chemicals in Clark Field, which, I stressed would be harmful to the physical and mental health of the athletes who would be housed while training there. You see, Clark Field is bidding to host the 2005 Southeast Asian Games and preparing to build an Olympic City, including training quarters, in a choice spot inside the sprawling former US base. Therefore in order to boost the country's SEA Games bid, aside from preserving the long bond of friendship between the two allies, President Macapagal should ask Mr. Bush to clean up this former American base. While there was no deliberate dumping of toxic waste in the former US bases, it does not mean that the Americans have no moral obligation to extend a helping hand in the total cleanup of the base and provide compensation to and medical treatment of affected residents there.

***

MAKE MINE MAVS. My daughter Coleen, who is a Batang Red Bull diehard in the PBA, is rooting for the Tim Duncan-led San Antonio Spurs in the NBA, but I am for the Dallas Mavericks in their keenly awaited Western Conference best-of-seven finals this week, a matchup that is expected to eclipse even the NBA championship series itself. Although, the odds are stacked in favor of San Antonio, which ousted the three-time defending champion Los Angeles Lakers last Friday (in Manila), I am still picking the Mavs to win mainly because of their awesome firepower, vastly improved defense and big fighting hearts, thanks largely to sweet-shooting Dirk Nowitzki, Steve Nash, Nick van Exel and Michael Finley, who mauled the highly favored Sacramento Kings, 112-99, Sunday to make the Western Conference finals. For all you know, I could be right and the experts wrong like when they predicted the LA Lakers, the 76ers and the Kings to win the playoffs.

NCA tilt resumes

THE NCA 7-Cock Derby resumes today (Monday) and Wednesday at the Araneta Coliseum. The event hosted by Ito Ynares and Claude Bautista will be joined by Boyboy Roa's R&B Farm Binangonan, Ito Ynares' UMA Binangonan, CJR Nevada of Tos Reyes, RT 114 BJ Highrise of Ruel Ricafort and Edgar Santos and brothers Alex and Gerry Escalona, LCC Expressway of Louie Cua and Pol Estrellado, among others.

PBL starts drug-testing program

By Dennis U. Eroa

WITHOUT much funfare, the Philipine Basketball League has started its drug testing program to weed out the undesirables in its ranks.

"We're doing this to maintain the integrity of the PBL," said PBL chair Dioceldo Sy following a board meeting last Friday where measures to keep the league drug-free were unanimously approved.

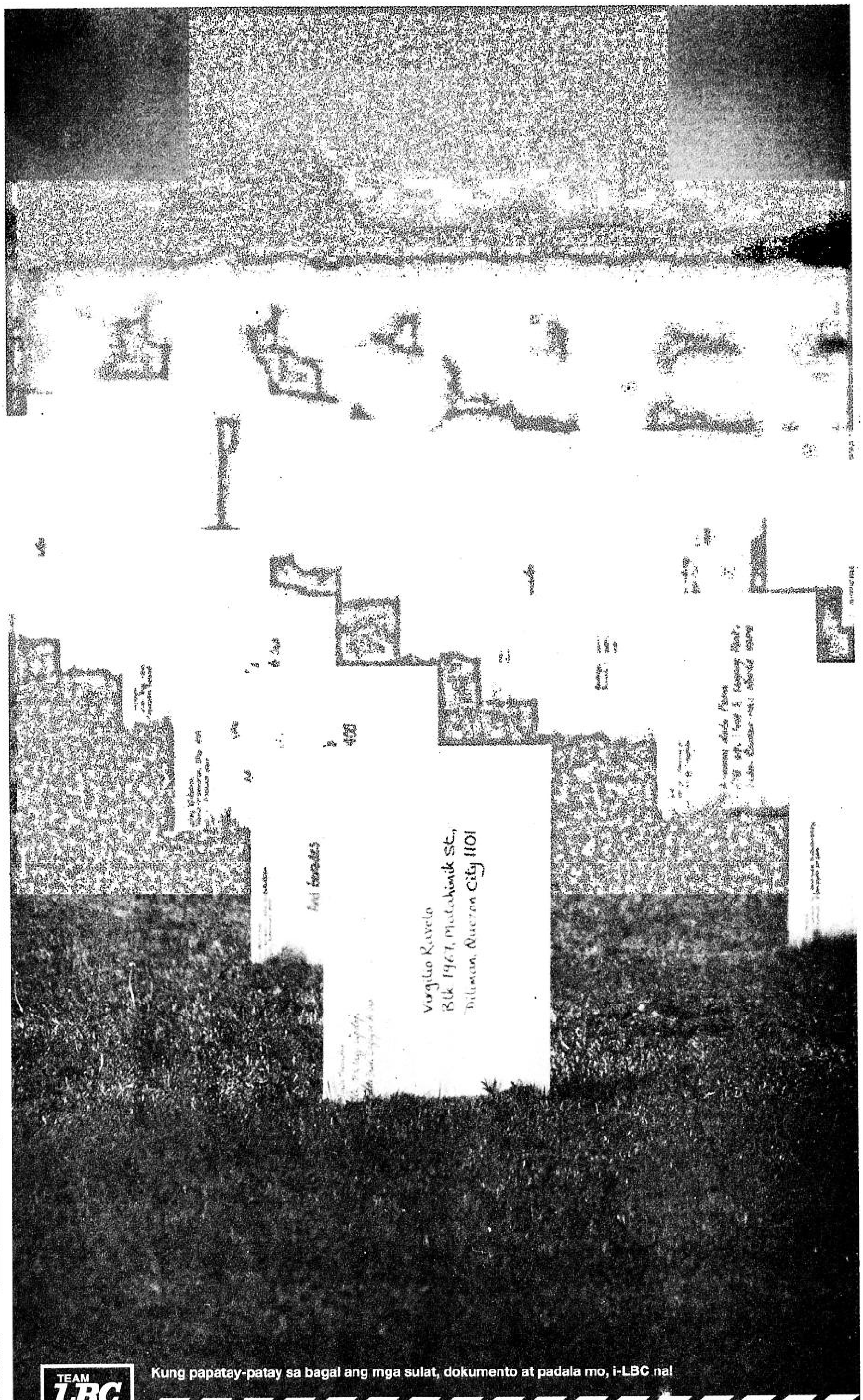
Sy noted that the owners all agreed that drug testing is "a must for the league."

The INQUIRER learned that the first team to voluntarily submit itself to drug testing was Viva Mineral Water. The Water Force, who are presently locked in a tight battle with Blu Detergent for the fourth and final semifinal slot in the ongoing Sunkist PBL Unity Cup, proved drug-free.

The board's move came after Commissioner Chino Trinidad had warned players of serious consequences if they flunk the drug tests.

Trinidad said drug abuse falls under Rule 13, Sec. A of the PBL which says "that a company can terminate the services of a player if he fails, refuses or neglects to conform his personal conduct to standards of good citizenship, good moral character and sportsmanship; to keep himself in A-1 physical condition or to obey the league training programs."

Asia-Pacific Medical and Diagnostic Services, Inc., a Makati-based private company, is handling the league's drug testing program.



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AT A GLANCE

CONFERENCE FINALS

Eastern Conference

(1) Detroit vs. (2) New Jersey
Pistons 0, Nets 0
Game 1 at Detroit (May 19, 1:30 a.m.)
Game 2 at Detroit (May 21, 8 a.m.)
Game 3 at New Jersey (May 23, 8:30 a.m.)
Game 4 at New Jersey (May 25, TBD)
*Game 5 at Detroit (May 27, 8 a.m.)
*Game 6 at New Jersey (May 29, 8 a.m.)
*Game 7 at Detroit (May 31, 8 a.m.)

Western Conference

(1) San Antonio vs (3) Dallas
Spurs 0, Mavericks 0
Game 1 at San Antonio (May 20, 9:30 a.m.)
Game 2 at San Antonio (May 22, 9:30 a.m.)
Game 3 at Dallas (May 24, 9:30 a.m.)
Game 4 at Dallas (May 26, 8:30 a.m.)
*Game 5 at San Antonio (May 28, 9:30 a.m.)
*Game 6 at Dallas (May 30,9:30 a.m.)
*Game 7 at San Antonio (June 1,8:30 a.m.)
(Dallas beats Sacramento 112-99, wins series, 4-3)

* If necessary
TBD (To Be Determined)

SPORTS noodle

Bong Barrameda VOL. I NO. 006

Olympic Symbols

A serving of 7 questions, from easiest to toughest, each with a corresponding point value. Can you score a perfect 100 (or, at least, beat the other 'sports genius/geniuses' beside you)?

1 > 3 Pts.
o True / o False: At the Ancient Olympic Games, winners were presented with a simple olive tree branch.

2 > 5 Pts.
What do the five interlinked Olympic rings-colored blue, black, red, yellow and green--represent?
o Five major continents
o Five major sports disciplines

3 > 7 Pts.
The Olympic motto "Citius, Altius, Fortius" is a Latin phrase that literally means what?
o "Gold, Silver, Bronze"
o "Faster, Higher, Stronger"
o "I came, I saw, I conquered"

4 > 10 Pts.
Which country is always first in line during the Opening Ceremony's Parade of Nations?
o Greece
o Defending overall champion
o Host nation

5 > 15 Pts.
The modern torch relay was first seen in which Olympics?
o 1896 Athens Games
o 1912 Stockholm Games
o 1936 Berlin Games
o 1956 Melbourne Games

6 > 25 Pts.
The first official Olympic mascot was Waldi, who made his debut at the 1972 Munich Games. What kind of creature was Waldi?
o Dog
o Eagle
o Lion
o Wolf

7 > 30 Pts.
Fill in the missing word of the Olympic Creed: "The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have _______ but to have fought well."

ANSWERS/A30

Mavs make it all-Texas final in the West

DALLAS—Dirk Nowitzki flew in his old coach to give him a boost, then poured in a game-high 30 points to carry the Dallas Mavericks to an easier-than expected 112-99 Game Seven win over the Sacramento Kings in their Western Conference semi-final on Saturday.

The Mavericks now tackle the San Antonio Spurs in an all-Texas conference final, starting on Monday in San Antonio.

"They're the best team in basketball right now," Mavericks' coach Don Nelson said of his team's next opponent.

It will be Dallas's first trip to the conference final since 1988.

Nowitzki's former coach and advisor Holger Geschwinder, who came all the way from Wurzburg, Germany, watched intently throughout the game.

Earlier, he and his star pupil had talked and gone over fundamentals.

"He always helps me out, especially mentally," said Nowitzki, who also grabbed a whopping 19 rebounds.

"He's been with me my whole career. I'm glad he came." Mavs' coach Nelson was glad to have Nowitzki; it was his plan to involve the German more than in past games.

"I thought I had to run more things for Dirk," Nelson said.

"He did his thing, 30 points on 20 shots. That's what the big boys do." Nelson had kind words for his entire squad, adding,

"Everybody played well tonight. You can't find anybody who didn't play well." Nick Van Exel was next best for the Mavericks with 23 points, making several three-pointers to turn the tide when it appeared the Kings were going to make a game of it.

"I don't like Van Exel," Sacramento coach Rick Adelman joked. "He was unbelievable the whole series." MAJOR CONCERN Steve Nash and Michael Finley added 18 points each for Dallas.

Mike Bibby paced Sacramento with 25 points, with ex-Mav Jimmy Jackson getting 24.

Jackson was a concern in the early going, as Van Exel admitted at the half.

"We gotta get tq Jimmy," he said at the break, "keep him off the board." The visitors had all of 25 points midway through the second period before catching fire. A 15-0 run -- sparked by Jackson -- gave them a short-lived lead.

But the Mavericks got all but one of the remaining points in the quarter to take a 48-43 half-time lead.

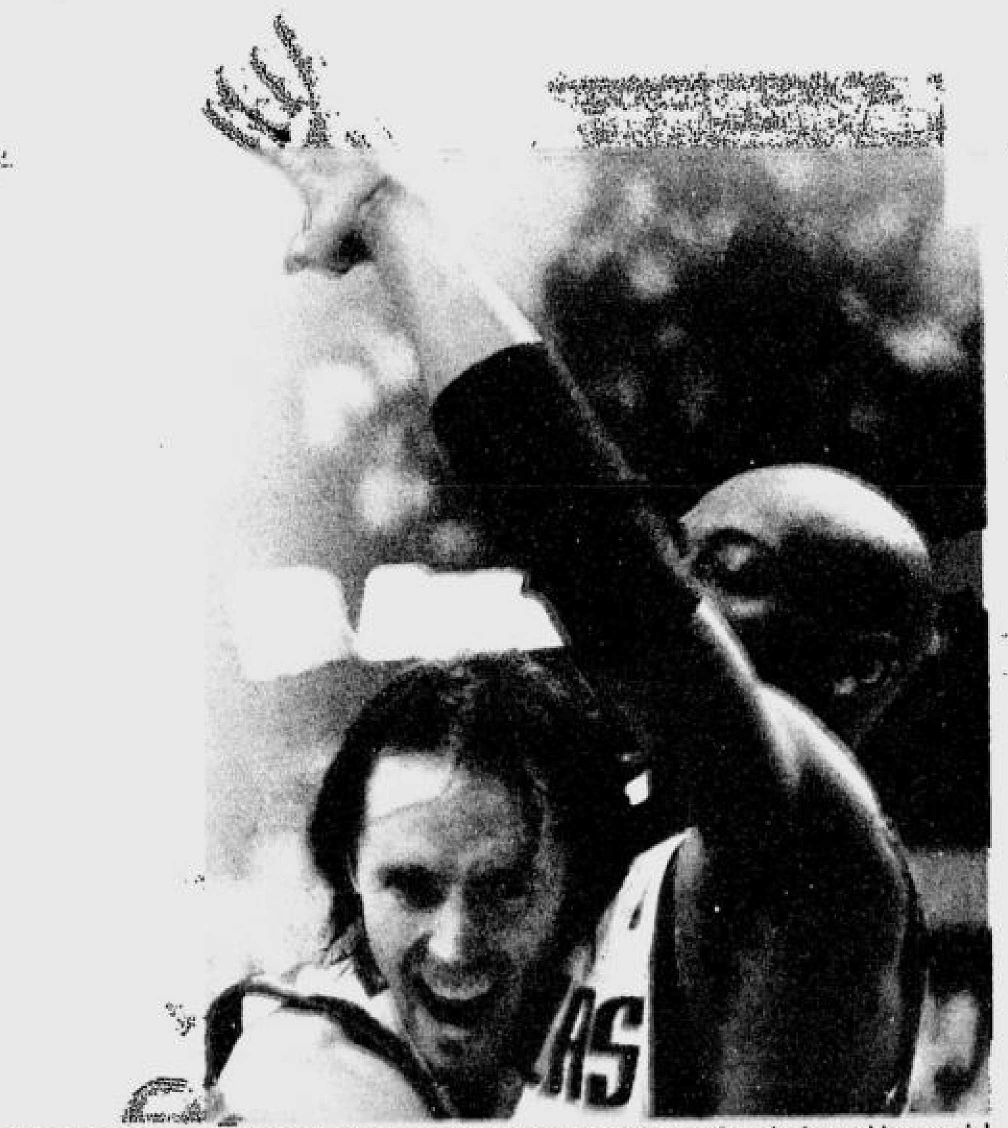
They were never headed the rest of the way.

Perhaps the unluckiest member of the Kings set-up was team leader Chris Webber, who had hoped to return to action in the next series despite tearing his knee early in this one.

He watched from the bench in street clothes, telling a sideline reporter: "It's really a helpless feeling being on the side." Dallas has now gone seven games twice in these playoffs.

The Mavericks blew a 3-0 series lead before defeating the Portland Trail Blazers 107-95 in Game Seven in the opening playoff round. *AP*

MAVERICKS forward Dirk Nowitzki drives against Peja Stojakovic of Sacram
the Western conference semi-finals Saturday.


CELEBRATION: Guards Steve Nash and Nick Van Exel celebrate after the latter hit a crucial three point shot late in the fourth quarter against the Sacramento Saturday. Nash and Van Exel played crucial roles in the Mavericks' victory. REUTERS

Pistons open with

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan—Twelve hours after one of the franchise's biggest victories, the Detroit Pistons were back on the practice court, defying the skeptics again.

With barely any time to celebrate–or even sleep–following Friday night's series-clinching overtime victory at Philadelphia, the Pistons had no trouble getting motivated for the New Jersey Nets. Game 1 of the Eastern Conference finals is Sunday.

"There were some things that were said that kind of made it personal," guard Chucky Atkins said Saturday. "There were some comments made about us from Richard Jefferson, something about us being overrated. Nobody has given us a chance all year."

Jefferson took that swipe at the Pistons during the regular season, but the recycled bulletin-board material still serves the purpose for a group of players not used to getting this far. Detroit is in the conference finals for the first time since
1991, a year after its last NBA titl
The Pistons got home at 2 a.n
day and were on the floor at 2 p.n
Richard Hamilton, so excited
team's success in his first postse
perience, said he liked the
turnaround because it keeps hi
from taking over.
"You don't get a chance to dwe
Hamilton said. "To me, it still h
in. Everybody calls me and says 'N
you believe you're in the finals?'
like, 'Hey, it's more games you ca
The Nets, meanwhile, have pr
twiddled their thumbs all week
for this series to start. They fi
four-game sweep of Boston on
seemingly creating a natural ac
for a team that loves to run.
"They haven't had much res
forward Kenyon Martin said.
want to go up there and play ou
We want to go out there and im
will on them. They want to pla
halfcourt. We want to run. We'll

Shaq no-show irks coach

EL SEGUNDO, California—Shaquille O'Neal was a no-show at the Los Angeles Lakers' exit interviews Saturday, drawing a negative reaction from coach Phil Jackson.

"I am upset. It's disrespectful to us as a staff," Jackson said at the team's practice facility. "It's closure. It's adult responsibility to do that."

Team spokesman John Black said O'Neal and Rick Fox were the only players on the 13-man roster who didn't make appointments for Saturday's meetings. Two nights earlier, the Lakers' three-year run as NBA champions ended when they were eliminated from the playoffs by the San Antonio Spurs.

Fox is in New York recuperating from surgery on his left foot.

Nine players kept their appointments. Brian Shaw called to reschedule for Monday, and Samaki Walker, an unrestricted free agent who rarely played in the postseason, didn't call or show up, Black said.

Jackson said he didn't expect O'Neal to attend since he hadn't filled out an appointment slip after Thursday night's 110-82 loss to San Antonio, which gave the Spurs a 4-2 Western Conference semifinal series victory.

Jackson also said O'Neal's physical condition will be a major factor in the Lakers' attempt to return to the top.

"Our team needs the infusion of his energy at full throttle," the coach said.

O'Neal had surgery on his arthritic right big toe Sept. 11 and missed the season's first 12 games recuperating from the operation. Although he was often dominant and was selected as a member of the All-NBA first team, he didn't appear 100 percent over a long period of time.

He told Jackson after Game 5 of the San Antonio series that his left knee was bothering him.

Jackson said he wouldn't think in terms of O'Neal's weight when considering his conditioning, but added: "It's about discipline and dedication. Whether it results in numbers, I don't care."

"We've always known that as Shaq goes, so goes the Lakers," Jackson said. "It's still about the force you have in the middle."

Jackson said meetings with the nine players who showed up–Kobe Bryant, Robert Horry, Devean George, Derek Fisher, Mark Madsen, Slava Medvedenko, Jannero Pargo, Kareem Rush and Tracy Murray –went very well. *AP*

Anaheim no sitting ducks in Stan

ANAHEIM, California—The Anaheim Mighty Ducks gave themselves plenty of time to savor their first berth in the Stanley Cup finals.

Goaltender Jean-Sebastien Giguere and the upstart Mighty Ducks begin what could be a lengthy break after finishing their second sweep of the playoffs with a 2-1 victory over Minnesota on Friday night.

Anaheim must await the winner of the Eastern Conference finals between the New Jersey Devils and Ottawa Senators.

It could be a while. If that series goes seven games, it won't end until Friday.

The Ducks don't mind having some time to relax and get ready for the Cup finals.

"Rest is a weapon and I think we can use it," said Giguere, who continued his sensational postseason run by allowing only one goal in the sweep of the Wild.

"Physically, I feel pretty good. We've got a lot of rest in between the series. Even before the first series, we got five or six days rest."

The seventh-seeded Ducks swept defending Stanley Cup champion Detroit in the first round, then eliminated top-seeded Dallas 4-2 in the second round.

The Ducks and their stingy goalie, who's playing in his first postseason, are 12-2.

Rookie coach Mike Babcock doesn't intend for this week to be a vacation for the Ducks.

"Our plan will be to get prepared. We will get prepared," he said emphatically. "We will have a pretty good report on the team we'll play. We will work out guys and get healthy and be, obviously, ready to go."

He's not concerned about any rust accumulating.

"Maybe you're not going to be as good in the first seven minutes as you should be, but the bottom line is, we know how to play. We'll stay sharp," Babcock said.

Adam Oates, who scored both Anaheim goals in the clinching victory over Minnesota, knows the coach will keep the Ducks on their toes.

"We obviously have some tough practices coming up," said the 40-y
Oates. "I think both teams (the De
Senators) are really good. They'
ously playing great hockey to be in
sition they are, and we'll deal wi
when we can."
Giguere lost his bid for an unpre
ed fourth straight playoff shutout
Game 4 against Minnesota. But a
ing up the goal to Andrew Brune
deflection during a power play
Wild's fourth shot of the game, he
their next 21.
The goal was the first allowed
Anaheim goalie since the third p
the final victory over Dallas in the
round.
"I knew at some point, there
ing to be a goal some way, som
said Giguere, who turned 26 on
"It had become kind of a distr
with people asking about it. I f
team did an unbelievable job pla
front of me. They made my job s
easier."
Oates rates the goalie's postse
"fantastic."

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ento to highlight Dallas determination in Game 7 of

AP

All-Argentine affair in Hamburg Masters

HAMBURG, Germany—Agustin Calleri and Guillermo Coria will meet in the final of the Hamburg Masters.

On a historic tennis day for Argentina, Calleri beat David Nalbandian 6-4, 6-1 on Saturday and the 12th-seeded Coria overcame Gaston Gaudio 6-3, 6-7 (3), 6-0.

Never before had four players from Argentina reached the semifinals at one ATP tournament. It was also the first time four countrymen contested the semifinals of a Masters Series, the nine tournaments that rank just below the Grand Slams.

"It's something very big for our country," Calleri said. The last Argentine to win in Hamburg was Guillermo Vilas in 1978.

Nalbandian, last year's Wimbledon finalist, was the highest-seeded player still in the event at No. 8.

Although technically an upset, his defeat against Calleri wasn't a complete surprise.

Nalbandian concedes that clay is not his best surface and that he is more comfortable on hard courts.

Calleri, on the other hand, has compiled the best record on clay this season along with Gaudio, 24-7, and won his first ATP title in Acapulco. He is in his third final on clay this year.

Coria used a backhand volley to win the first set and saved a set point while trailing 5-4 in the second stanza.

At 40-15 on his serve in the 12th game, he called the trainer to treat him for cramps in his left leg. Coria returned, won the game and forced the set into a tiebreaker. He committed a double-fault to deliver the set to Gaudio.

Coria, whose record on clay is 17-4, rallied and rolled through the final set.

"I had to play short points in the third set and to be aggressive," Coria said. 'Without the trainer, I couldn't have finished the match." AP

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Nets today

gets the best of it."

The Pistons countered by saying that their team is deep, with Ben Wallace the only player to consistently log heavy minutes. Point guard Chauncey Billups, who has to chase Jason Kidd all over the court, should also be fresh after sitting out three games in the Philadelphia series with a sprained ankle.

"It's a great matchup–I feel like he is the best point guard in the league," Billups said. "It's a great challenge for me because he's Mr. Everything for them."

The other interesting matchup is Martin vs Wallace, two inside forces with similar styles. Wallace is the league's two-time defensive player of the year, but Martin did a great job against Boston's Antoine Walker. *AP*

GAME 1 of the NBA Eastern Conference Finals between the New Jersey Nets and Detroit Pistons will be shown on Solar Sports today (Monday, May 19) at 7:30 a.m. The replay will be at 7 p.m. on IBC-13 and again at 10 p.m. on Channel 29.

ley Cup finals

"We obviously wouldn't be here without him. We believe in him. He's carried us this far," he said.

The one goal by Minnesota was the fewest ever in a best-of-seven series. The Wild came in with a playoff-high 42 goals. Two teams–Boston in 1935 and Montreal in 1952– were held to two goals in a series.

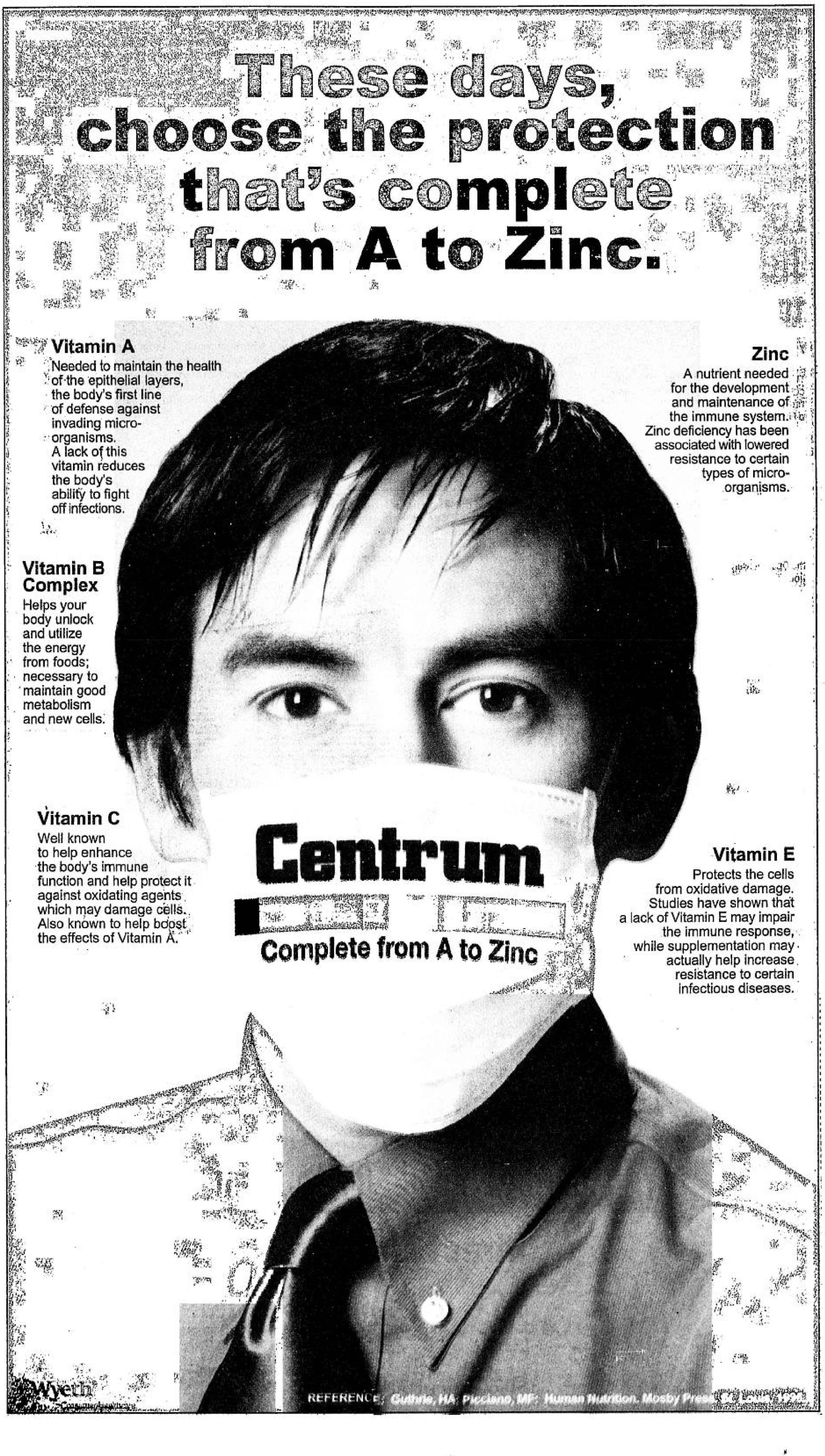
"To give up one goal in a series is unbelievable," Babcock said.

Minnesota's Jason Marshall thought so, too.

"J.S. is outstanding. He's been the best," Marshall said.

Giguere's scoreless streak ended at 217 minutes, 54 seconds–the fifth longest playoff string in NHL history and the longest since Montreal's Gerry McNeil went 218:42 in 1951.

The Ducks are trying to follow in the footsteps of the Angels, who also were long shots in the playoffs last fall but won their first World Series title. Both the Ducks and Angels are owned by the Walt Disney Co., although the baseball team is being sold to Arizona businessman Arturo Moreno, and the hockey team is up for sale. *AP*



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Wyeth

REFERENCE: Guthrie, HA; Picciano, MF: Human Nutrition. Mosby Press

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Triple Crown: One to go for Funny Cide

FULL GALLOP: Funny Cide heads for victory in the 128th Preakness Stakes at the Pimlico race track in Baltimore, Maryland. With the victory, Funny Cide will go for the third and final jewel of the Triple Crown in three weeks at Belmont. AFP

BALTIMORE—Funny Cide barreled down the stretch for a runaway victory and sweet redemption for his jockey in the Preakness Stakes on Saturday, setting the stage for a Triple Crown try at Belmont Park in three weeks.

It was the second remarkable win in a row for the New York-bred chestnut gelding, journeyman trainer Barclay Tagg and an ownership group of high school pals who kicked in $5,000 apiece to start Sackatoga Stable.

The win, however, may have meant the most to jockey Jose Santos. It came just five days after he was cleared by Churchill Downs stewards investigating a photograph and a news report that raised the question of whether he carried something other than his whip when he rode Funny Cide to victory in the Kentucky Derby.

Instead of two days, Santos had to wait less than two minutes for the verdict this time. Funny Cide pulled away from the field turning for home and steadily increased his margin through the stretch before the cheering crowd of 100,268 at Pimlico Race Course.

His powerful finish was something to behold: He won by 9 3/4 lengths–1/4 length shy of Survivor's 10-length victory in the first Preakness, in 1873.

The win moved Funny Cide to the brink of racing immortality–on June 7 he will attempt to become the 12th Triple Crown champion and first since Affirmed in 1978.

Funny Cide will be the fifth horse in the last seven years with a Triple chance, and ninth since Affirmed swept the Derby, Preakness and Belmont a quarter century ago.

A gelding has never won the Triple Crown.

At the finish, Santos stood in the stirrups, put his fingers to his lips, blew a kiss and then held up two fingers–as if he wanted to make sure all the world could see there was nothing in his hand.

The 9-5 favorite in the field of 10 3-year-olds, Funny Cide covered the 1.9 kilometers (1 3/16th-mile) Preakness in 1:55.61, well off the record of 1:53.4 last accomplished by Louis Quatorze in 1996.

Midway Road, a 20-1 shot, was second, with Scrimshaw third and Peace Rules fourth. Senor Swinger was fifth, followed by New York Hero, Foufa's Warrior, Cherokee's Boy, Ten Cents a Shine and Kissin Saint.

Funny Cide won for the fifth time in seven starts and earned $650,000 for Sackatoga, boosting his career money totals to $1,889,385. Tagg, a self-described eternal pessimist, bought Funny Cide for $75,000 late last year. *AP*

10 horses die in fire at Sta. Ana

By Christian V. Esguerra

TEN race horses worth a combined P1 million were killed in a fire that gutted three stables and five houses at the Santa Ana racetrack in Makati City yesterday afternoon.

Among the dead horses were Arabica, Sweet Topic, Smile for Me, Lucky Swing, Lovely Luigi, Kentucky Halo, and Globemaster, who all belong to racing's lower division.

Some died of suffocation while others were burned to death.

Most of the horses were housed at the Conrado Co stable while three were owned by Romeo Rubio according to city fire marshal Arsenio Tabajonda.

No one could tell what caused the fire or where it actually started. Investigators are looking into the possibility that the Co and Rubio stables had been deliberately set on fire.

Caretaker Jimmy Baylon, 34, said he first saw smoke coming from a house behind the Co stable on Crystal Street in Barangay Carmona at around 3 p.m.

The flames immediately engulfed houses and stables nearby before fire trucks could get through the narrow streets leading to the site.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: Pistons vs Nets, Game 1; 7:30 a.m. (r - 10 p.m.); Solar Sports; 7 p.m.; IBC 13 - New Jersey and Detroit begin their best-of-seven series for the Eastern Conference title.

NBA Jam; 6:30 p.m.; IBC 13 - Whet your basketball appetite with a smorgasbord of slam dunks, buzzer beaters and other spectacular moves in this half - hour show.

SPORTS noodle

Answers: From page A28

1. True
2. Five major continents
3. "Faster, Higher, Stronger"
4. Greece
5. 1936 Berlin Games
6. Dog (a dachshund)
7. 'Conquered'

Santos: Look Ma, no tricks

BALTIMORE—There was nothing up his sleeve this time, either. But the showman in jockey Jose Santos wouldn't let the moment go without a flourish.

And so the second he crossed the finish line aboard Funny Cide after a near-record Preakness win, Santos made a fist with his right hand, thrust it into the sky and then waved with the open palm toward the grandstand where his wife and kids cheered and laughed and cried all at once.

But the jockey and the unlikely chestnut that now have ripped the first two jewels from the Triple Crown were a long way from finished. Santos then flashed a "V" for victory–or maybe it was two down, one to go–and said through a widening grin, "The only machine carrying me was the red horse."

If there was a more appropriate end for one of the nuttiest two-week stretches in thoroughbred racing, somebody better get to work on it.

On the first Saturday in May, Funny Cide showed up Louisville to take a swing at the Kentucky Derby with three strikes seemingly against him. He was a New York-bred and none had ever won the Derby. He was a gelding and the last time a gelding had won the race was 1929. And on his back was Santos, a jockey whose salad days were almost 15 years behind him.

As unlikely as the resulting win by the 12-1 shot in the Derby seemed, stranger still was what followed. A week later, a photograph and story in the Miami Herald raised questions about what Santos carried in his right hand beside a whip and though Santos was one of the most honorable riders in the business, that hardly placed him above suspicion.

Four years earlier, a jockey won the Arkansas Derby while concealing a battery-powered device to shock the horse, but was subsequently caught and suspended. When Santos tried, in heavily accented English, to answer questions about the photograph, his explanation caused even more confusion.

But then three of his fellow jockeys from the Derby stepped forward to try to clear his name and a day later, the Churchill Downs stewards followed suit.

Santos said he was grateful for the support and eager to get back to work. Though he vowed to win the Preakness, it was hardly the ideal way to prepare for the second-biggest race of his career. One of his kids heard the accusations and left school in tears and some in Funny Cide's camp knew all the reassurances in the world wouldn't be enough for some people.

"The first day, we didn't really think it would turn into the kind of fiasco it did," his wife, Rita, said just before the Preakness. "But it started to take its toll."

Everybody in Funny Cide's corner took their lead from Santos and pretended otherwise.

Jack Knowlton, who heads up the chestnut's wacky ownership group, refused to call it a distraction. Trainer Barclay Tagg, a pessimist on good days, said he had plenty of other things to worry about. AP

V for VICTORY or "Two down, one to go." Whatever the sign means, jockey Jose Santos celebrates with two fingers aboard Funny Cide. AFP

Tiger comeback not likely in Germany

ALVESLOHE, Germany—Tiger Woods is going to have to top his best ever comeback performance if he plans to retain his title at the Deutsche Bank-SAP Open.

The world's best golfer has never charged back from nine strokes down on the final day in any of his 50 victories. His top comeback was at the 1998 Johnnie Walker Classic, where he trailed Ernie Els by eight, then beat the South African in a playoff.

But not even Woods was giving himself much of a chance Saturday at the Deutsche Bank, where Irish Ryder Cup player Padraig Harrington holds a two-stroke lead and nine over him.

"Probably not, the way things are going," said Woods, tied for 38th. "There are too many players out there."

Harrington heads the leaderboard with 15-under-par 201, with Woods at 6-under 210.

Woods will have to get a shaky putter under control, but could take heart that Harrington has led far more tournaments than he's won. The Irishman has six titles, but 19 seconds, one of which came Sunday at the Benson & Hedges. He shared the third round lead, then was runner-up again after blowing up with a last round 75.

But Woods has more to worry about than just Harrington, the world No. 9 and some say Europe's best golfer at the moment. The Irishman won the Dunhill Links, the Target World Challenge and the BMW Asian Open over the winter.

For Woods to win, no one between him and the leaders can get hot and some good players like 2001 U.S. Open champion Retief Goosen will have to fall apart. The South African is three off the lead.

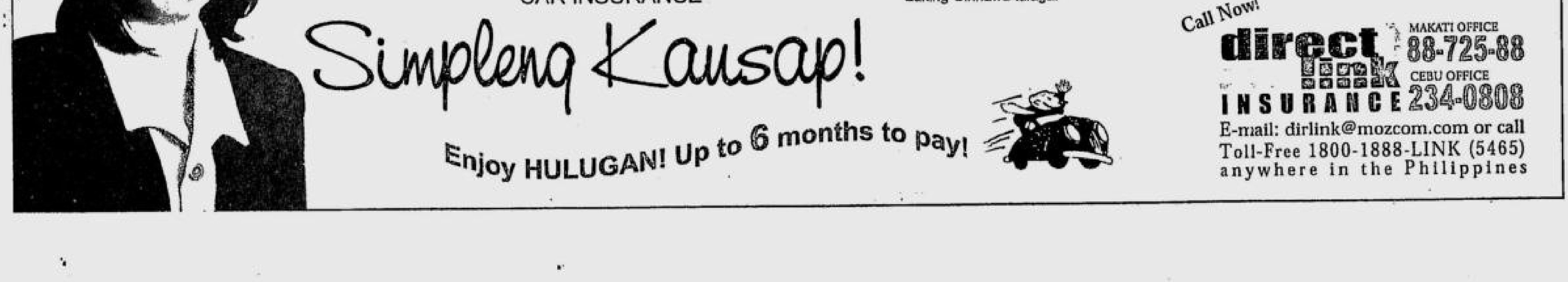
Woods seemed to be thinking more about the U.S. Open, which starts June 12 at the Muirfield Village course, than capturing the 2.7 million euros ((US$3.10 million) Deutsche Bank Open for the fourth time after 1999, 2001 and 2002.

"This is good preparation. I know the golf course we're going to, it's in perfect shape," said Woods, who will only play one more event between last months' Masters and the coming major.

Woods has made one charge to win in his career that appears to be as improbable as the one he faces in Germany.

At the 2000 AT&T Pebble Beach, he trailed Matt Gogel and Mark Brooks by five heading into the final round, then fell seven strokes back after 11 holes. He still won by two over Gogel and Vijay Singh.

Maybe Woods' problem is he doesn't get along with the Gut Kaden course. *AP*



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IOC bewails ban on disabled teams from SARS-hit areas

MADRID, Spain—IOC president Jacques Rogge expressed surprise Saturday over Ireland's decision to ban athletes from five SARS-hit countries from next month's Special Olympics.

Rogge, who has urged sports organizations not to overreact to the threat of severe acute respiratory syndrome, said there was no reason to discriminate against athletes from countries affected by SARS.

"I don't know why a government would restrict the entry of athletes and still allow the entry of business people and other anonymous passengers and travelers," Rogge said. "I would even say that athletes have far better health and far better immune systems than any other citizens, so I am surprised."

Irish Health Minister Micheal Martin announced Thursday that an expert medical committee had concluded that about 300 athletes and other officials from China, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Singapore and Taiwan pose too great a risk to the weeklong competition.

The Special Olympics begins June 16 at venues across Ireland. The event, founded by Eunice Shriver Kennedy in 1968, is for developmentally disabled athletes from the age of 8. This is the first time the Special Olympics will be held outside the United States.

Rogge said the IOC is ready to take "exceptional measures under exceptional circumstances" if SARS threatens to disrupt qualifying for the Athens Olympics. *AP*

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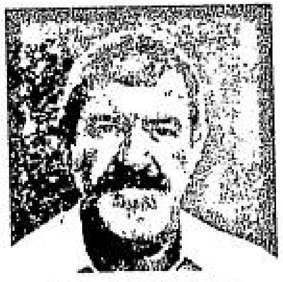
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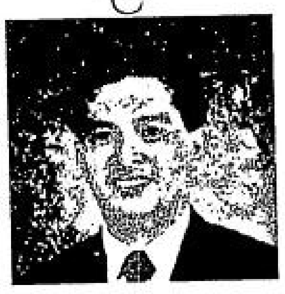
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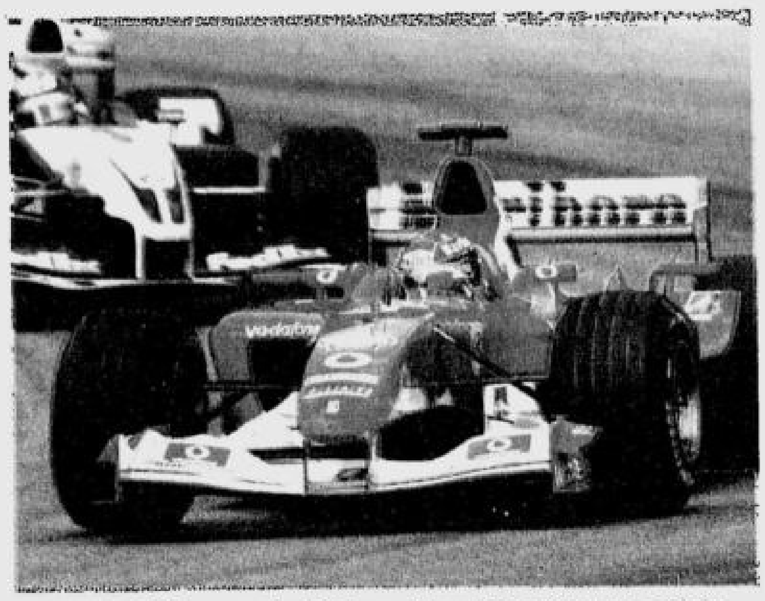

SCHUMACHER paces the Williams of Juan Pablo Montoya early in the Austrian Grand Prix. AFP

Schumi survives fire, wins in Austria

SPIELBERG, Austria—Five-time world champion Michael Schumacher escaped a dramatic pit lane fire to claim a remarkable victory in the Austrian Grand Prix at the A1 Ring on Sunday.

McLaren's Kimi Raikkonen was second with Schumacher's Ferrari teammate Rubens Barrichello in third but the German ace's win, his third in a row this season, came in the most dramatic circumstances.

As he pitted for the first time on lap 22, the fuel caught fire sending flames springing into the air and Ferrari mechanics scurrying for the fire extinguishers.

Schumacher, who had started from pole and was race leader at the time, sat coolly in his seat as the flames were put out and rejoined the race in third place handing the lead to Juan Pablo Montoya in a Williams.

But disaster struck for Montoya on lap 31 as the engine blew on his Williams which allowed Schumacher to incredibly retake the lead after outbraking Raikkonen into a corner.

Schumacher then set a new lap record as he pushed ahead knowing that the fire at his first stop had meant he had been under-fuelled.

The signs of danger for Ferrari had already been there when Rubens Barrichello endured a 20-second pit stop after his fuel rig jammed.

Schumacher pitted for a second time on the 41st lap but Raikkonen, who came in eight laps later, was unable to make any impression on Schumacher as the German star roared to one of his most spectacular victories.

The victory moved Schumacher to within two points of the Finn in the drivers' championship, but it was enough to move Ferrari ahead in the constructors' race. *AFP*

GOLF CHAMP

It's a breeze for Delariarte

By Jong Arcano

HE just wasn't thinking of the odds all stacked up in his favor. Jerome Delariarte also didn't want to disappoint his overseas-based father who flew in hoping to see him win the Philippine amateur golf championship again.

So when Delariarte accomplished the mission by surviving a relentless Boyet Saragoza in 35 agonizing holes yesterday, he sought out his father Lorenzo and set a date for a round of golf they haven't done for quite sometime now.

"It's a good feeling when you achieve something like this and he's around with my mom," said Delariarte, moments after wrapping up the title match with a 3 & 1 decision over Saragoza at the Langer course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club.

In a see-saw battle where both displayed consistent shotmaking with their bigheads and irons, it was so ironic that Saragoza lost it all on a grievous four-putt blunder on the shortest hole on the course.

Two down with two holes to go, Saragoza was going for the equalizer and seemed on track as he reached the green with a simple wedge on their second trip to the par-3 17th under driving rain.

Delariarte left his own tee shot short and with the pin in its most difficult position right at the top of a slope, it looked like the match would go down the wire.

It did not.

After Delariarte had pitched onto the green, Saragoza sent his uphill birdie attempt four feet past the cup. Delariarte then put his first putt to within a grip length for a sure bogey.

Now facing a very delicate downhill putt, Saragoza threw it all away by sending his second putt sliding eight feet past.

"I was bracing for the worst, I know Boyet was going all out to get the last two holes no matter what," Delariarte said. "I've done it to three of my last four opponents and I know it can also happen to me."

Delariarte led by no more than three holes throughout, noting a par-saving putt from 15 feet on the 32nd hole that kept his three-hole lead was the key shot of his round.

Before he faced Saragoza, Delariarte had to survive sudden-death duels against Jonard Rates (22 holes) in the first round, Juvic Pagunsan (20 holes) in the quarterfinals and Marvin Dumandan (19 holes) in the semifinals.

Easy march

Those tight wins followed a relatively easy march to the top of the stroke play eliminations.

Delariarte, whose father manages for a group of investors of a big firm in Manado, Indonesia, thus became only the seventh repeat winner in the 54-hole history of the tourney sponsored this year by DHL, Philippine Sports Commission, WWWExpress and DHL Worldwide.

The star of Southwoods' stable of top amateurs said that there are no definite plans on his joining the pro ranks this year.

But his swing guru, Bong Lopez, who led a throng of stablemates in providing Delariarte moral support by watching the entire match, believes his ward is ripe enough to go for it.

"*Pwedeng pwede na.* He's ready for the pros," Lopez said.

DELARIARTE: Finally, a relatively easy victory for the defending champion, although he needed 35 holes to dispose of Boyet Saragoza in the final. JESS YUSON

Fil-Am boxer invited to GMA-Bush dinner

By Salven L. Lagumbay
Contributor

A US-based boxer of Filipino parentage has been invited by US President George Bush to join Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo during the state dinner in honor of the RP leader tomorrow.

Brian Viloria of Waipahu, Hawaii, the undefeated NABF flyweight champion and once the WBC Youth titlist, said he is looking forward to meeting President Arroyo.

"This is an exciting moment for me," said Viloria, who now lives in Los Angeles near his training facility at Freddie Roach's Wild Card Gym, upon being told of the invitation. "I'm a little nervous, but I guess that's natural," Viloria added.

Bush's invitation to Viloria read: "The President and Mrs. Bush request the pleasure of the company of Mr. Viloria at a dinner to be held at the White House."

Viloria's parents are believed to be from Ilocos. Nicknamed "Hawaiian Punch" and a former member of the US Olympic boxing team and former world amateur champ, Viloria rose to prominence when he won the WBC Youth title in only his eighth fight as a professional, knocking out Mexican Frankie Soto in five rounds in June last year.

Two months later, he annexed the North-American Boxing Federation crown by decisioning Mexican Javier Lagos.

He successfully defended the NABF title three times,beating Alberto Rossel, Alejandro Moreno and Valentin Leon,who lasted only eight rounds in their fight last April.

Viloria, who is also trained by boxing guru Freddie Roach, once served as Gerry Peñalosa's chief sparmate while the latter was preparing for his fight against Masamori Tokuyama early this year.

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Banks' bad loans hit ₱253.9B in March

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BAD loans of more than 40 commercial banks rose again to 15.5 percent of their total loans in March from 15.08 percent the previous month.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said that based on the latest data using a revised definition that took out billions of loans that were already fully written off by banks, the non-performing loans ratio improved against 18 percent a year ago under the old definition.

Banks' NPLs rose 1.23 percent or P3.08 billion to P253.92 billion in March from P250.83 billion in February as total loans shrunk by 1.49 percent or P24.74 billion to P1.64 trillion from P1.66 trillion.

Under the old and stricter definition, bad loans in March stood at about P262 billion or equivalent to an NPL ratio of about 16 percent.

The BSP said lending activities contracted during the period as seen by a 9.13 percent or P18.65-billion drop in interbank loans. Taking these loans out of the equation, the NPL ratio went up to 17.19 percent from 17.48 percent in February.

Bad loans or NPLs are accounts whose principal or interest remained unpaid for 90 straight days.

The country's more than 100 thrift banks also suffered an increase in their bad loans to 12.22 percent of total loans in January from 11.58 percent in December as NPLs grew 3.39 percent to P18.06 billion while loans contracted 2.03 percent to P147.8 billion.

Aside from the looser definition, a BSP official credited increased restructuring among banks as a big factor in bringing down NPLs in the past months. A bad loan is taken out of the NPL portfolio once a bank and its client agreed to restructure the borrowing.

Restructured commercial bank loans in March rose 0.32 percent to P129.92 billion as foreclosed assets grew 0.57 percent to P185.4 billion. For thrift banks, these types of loans also went up to P3.3 billion in January from P3.17 billion in December.

Banks' coverage ratio, an indicator that tells whether banks have enough reserves to guard against defaults, slid to 49.93 percent in March from 50.16 percent in February as the increase in NPLs outpaced the 0.76 percent improvement in loan-loss reserves to P126.77 billion.

Savings banks posted a coverage ratio of 41.64 percent against 43.12 percent in December as loan reserves dropped 0.15 percent to P7.52 billion while bad loans soared.

Non-performing assets of commercial banks grew to P439.31

BANKS'/B2

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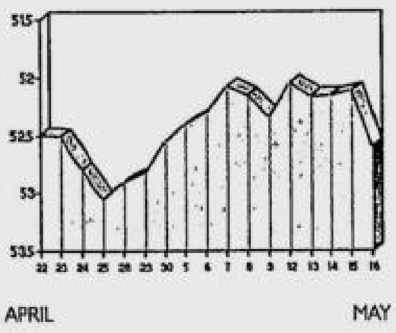

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STOCK MARKET

Stocks seen drifting sideways

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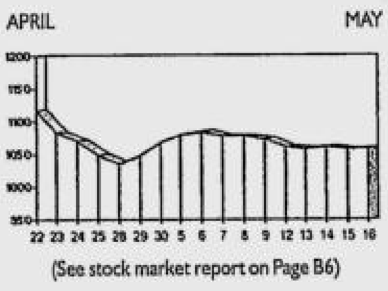


(See stock market report on Page B6)

LOCAL stocks are seen to drift sideways this week as the market awaits fresh incentives to buy after seeing mixed first-quarter corporate results.

Last week, the main-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix) lost another 1.3 percent or 13.75 points from a week ago to close at 1,059.53 on Friday.

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said the market would trade with caution this week as President Macapagal-Arroyo was set to leave for a state visit to the United States.

"Whenever the head of state goes abroad, stocks really weaken," Roxas said.

Another factor which likewise weighed down the market last week was the bombing incident in Saudi Arabia that killed at least 34 people, perked up oil prices and triggered fresh worries on global terrorism.

BPI Securities said that with the release of first-quarter results, "investors have little in the way of new developments to prompt accumulation."

"On the horizon is the release of first-quarter GDP (gross domestic product) results as well as the monthly tracking of the government's budget deficit," BPI Securities said.

"The lack of fresh leads should confine the market in consolidation," it said.

Among the companies which had released corporate results that

STOCKS/B6

Extension of IMF monitoring program eyed

THE PHILIPPINES may decide to extend its current post-program monitoring with the International Monetary Fund when it expires late this year following recommendations from the United States to continue having a seal of good housekeeping from an independent multilateral agency.

Either that or the country may explore another no-loan arrangement like a staff monitoring program that is very similar to a PPM. A loan program with the IMF, according to sources, is out of the question.

A senior finance official said extending the post-loan monitoring was one of the suggestions raised by US Assistant Secretary of State Jim Kelly with Philippine officials.

Some creditors and investors, including multilateral agencies, prefer that emerging economies continue to be monitored by the IMF as the Fund's stamp of approval reduces the perceived risks associated with a country.

But the issue of whether or not the PPM would be extended is being evaluated on its

EXTENSION/B4

SARS stunts Jollibee HK's growth

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE OUTBREAK of the killer SARS virus in Hong Kong has dashed hopes of escalating summer sales for the four stores of Philippine fast-food giant Jollibee Foods Corp. in the former Crown colony.

JFC chief finance officer Miguel Jose Navarrete said in an investors' briefing that the company's Hong Kong sales fell by 15-17 percent from a year ago amid the SARS scare on the island. He noted, however, that the situation "remains to be contained."

"For the large part, it has not spread to the Philippines and our overall business has not been affected," Navarrete said.

"But in Hong Kong, we expected that we will have a summer peak—that our sales level in the second quarter should be higher than the first quarter. So far, this has not occurred," he said.

At the very least, JFC's sales over the last two months were at par with the first quarter turnover, still quite a positive assessment given the difficult environment in Hong Kong, Navarrete noted.

"We were expecting that it would be worse," he said.

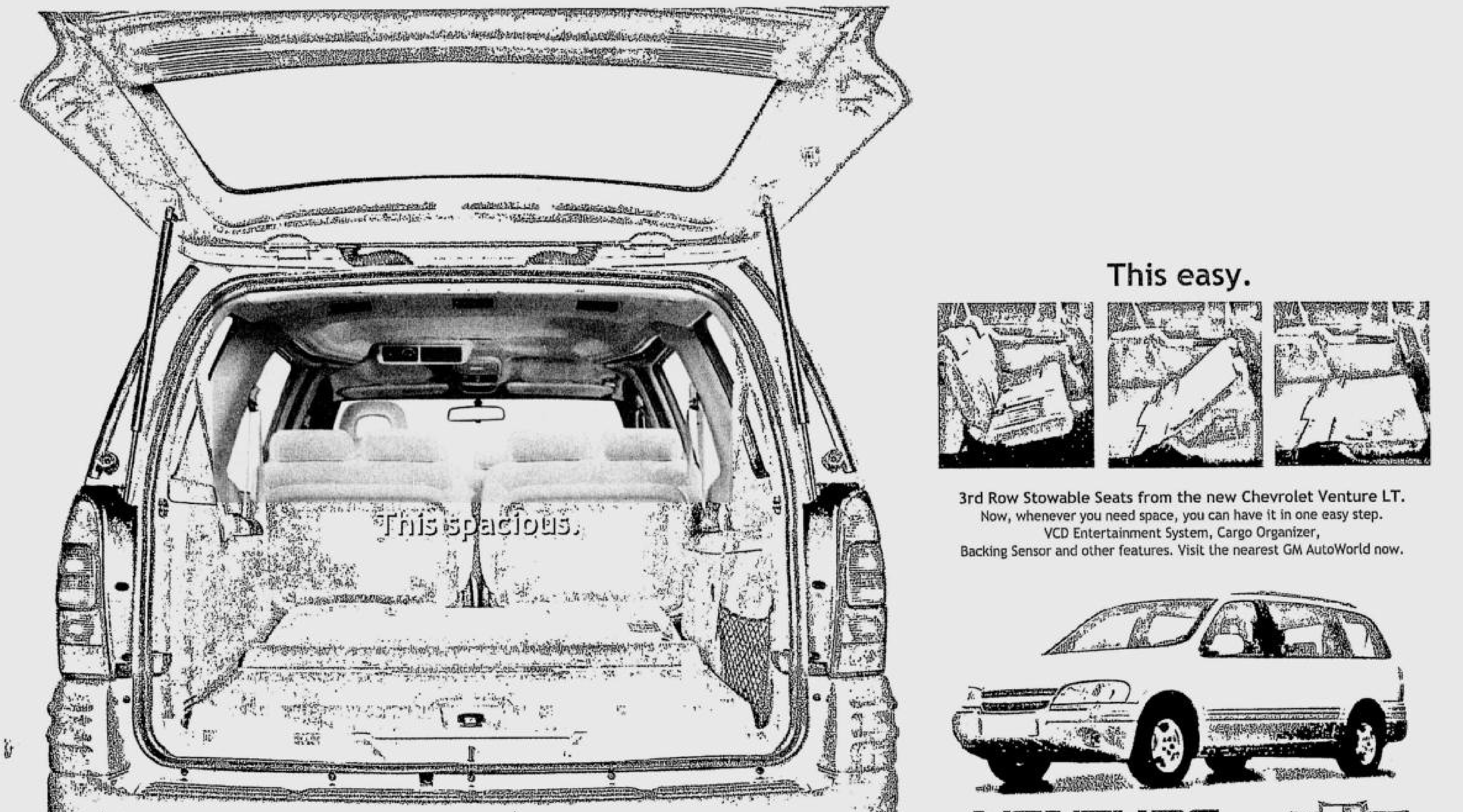
Navarrete also stressed that JFC's exposure in Hong Kong was but a small fraction of the company's total business.

JOLLIBEE Hong Kong outlet

"Luckily, we only have four stores there and we have over 900 in all," he said.

JFC is closely monitoring the situation in Hong Kong and is somehow relieved that it is not as badly hit.

SARS/B8



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Banks' ...

From page B1

billion in March, up 0.95 percent from P435.18 billion the previous month, pushing the NPA-to-total assets ratio to 13.43 percent from 13.37 percent.

Banks' NPLs peaked at 18.81 percent in October 2001 from a single-digit level before the 1997 Asian crisis. Since that time, banks have to contend with a growing portfolio of soured accounts.

Tough secret

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

PEOPLE in the pre-need industry are becoming suspicious these days, more distrustful than your mother-in-law perhaps, when you sneak home too late for her standards.

The pre-need guys think something must be cooking in their business. Their regulator, the SEC, for instance just recently cut the value of certain assets of a pre-need company.

The SEC said their value was much lower than what was assigned by the trustee banks. Down here, it only means that the company will have trouble with money.

If a company is for sale, you see, the price always depends on the value of its assets. Put the value way, way down, and you acquire the company at a bargain price.

And so a little conspiracy theory is making its rounds among pre-need groups. Is their business just ripe for the picking by other loaded groups?

* * *

PRE-NEED is a home-grown business. It is as Filipino as *bagoong*, although nowadays, at least for Filipinos in the United States, *bagoong* comes from Thailand.

It is called "pre-need" when you buy something at today's prices for use much later. You know—things like education plans and memorial plans.

When the pre-need business started some 30 years ago, the idea was simple. And that was, you really cannot buy funeral services just when you need them.

And so they clothed death with nice names; like memorial plan. Mortuaries became "memorial homes." I agree it sounds too morbid in our language—*funeraria*.

Still, pre-need is growing by 25 percent a year. It has about P30 billion in trust funds. Thus, it's easy to believe the claim of the pre-need guys that they are under attack.

* * *

NOW they say that the cousin of pre-need, the insurance business, is going down in this country in what seems to be an irreversible trend.

They say the insurance business is dropping by 10 percent a year. Thus, the strong suspicion in pre-need has something to do with the insurance slide.

The Philippine Federation of Pre-need Plan Companies is vocal about it. Some big foreign insurance groups are out to get the pre-need companies for a song.

They claim that the US-based companies even enjoy the backing of some influential figures in this cute administration of Gloriaetta.

They have been pointing at this group called Agile, a.k.a. "Accelerating Growth Investments Liberalization with Equity," whatever it means.

* * *

IT turned out that, as its name clearly and plainly indicated in no uncertain terms, Agile had no other choice but to do a thorough study on the pre-need business.

That was just fine to the pre-need guys. They were even willing to forget that Agile actually got a lot of funding from the United States.

It was just that the pre-need guys wondered how come the study had to be commissioned by the DTI—and in total secrecy, at that!

It was "top secret," because the DTI had nothing to do with pre-need, unless of course the DTI got too many complaints from the public about pre-need companies.

In that case, for the sake of the public, the DTI had all the reasons in the world to ask a US-funded group to do a study. Nobody should know about it. Not even the public for whose sake, of course, the study was being made in the first place. Such tough secret!

* * *

BUT the complaint ratio in pre-need was a negligible 0.006 percent. This means that, for every 100,000 customers of the pre-need sector, about six were probably not happy.

Actually, the DTI has a lot more dissatisfied customers than that. Just take a look at its approval ratings.

Under this cute administration, the DTI is showing a lot of leaning toward foreign companies.

And so in pre-need, they are wondering about the connection of foreign companies like AIG, Sunlife and Manulife with what went on between the DTI and Agile.

All of a sudden, the DTI was pushing for the treatment of "pre-need," at least on the government side, like it was just nothing but "insurance." Interesting.

* * *

IT was, to the pre-need guys, like using football rules to referee a basketball game. In no time, you would be out of players on the court. Everybody would be injured.

Even today such a suspicion in pre-need gains ground, because the SEC maintains consultants who get their pay from ... well, Agile.

There were five of them, or at least that was the number the last time the pre-need guys checked, and the consultants did nothing but tinker with rules on pre-need.

You know what—the coppo di tutti cappi of the consultants never even worked for any pre-need company. How can the SEC do a good job on pre-needs?

Maybe that's why the DTI has been pushing for the transfer of pre-need supervision from the SEC to the Insurance Commission. See—it's insurance after all!

* * *

ANYWAY, as reports have indicated, the pre-need guys point to two Cabinet members and two private individuals (one local and the other imported) as the "plotters."

That is going to take a lot of detective work to prove. But if you look at the trend, the SEC is obviously imposing a lot of new things on the pre-need sector, which have all been recommended by its Agile-paid consultants.

Now, if the SEC needs outside consultants to do its job, why do we have to pay taxes for the salaries of all those useless SEC officials?

* * *

IN case you want to know what happened to the court case against the garbage company Jancom, it is gathering dust in somebody's office at the Supreme Court.

Lately, the Supreme Court has been in a hurry to decide some big cases. It actually went wild with big decisions one after another, such as the Piatco and the Amari cases.

So what do you think? Maybe the Jancom case does not merit the same urgency as those two cases. After all, we are all just starting to stink down here. But as far as the money involved in those projects, I think the resolution of all those three cases should present huge income to their proponents.

That is reason enough for some groups to buy and sell, well, "influence."

Cyber Bay appeals high court ruling

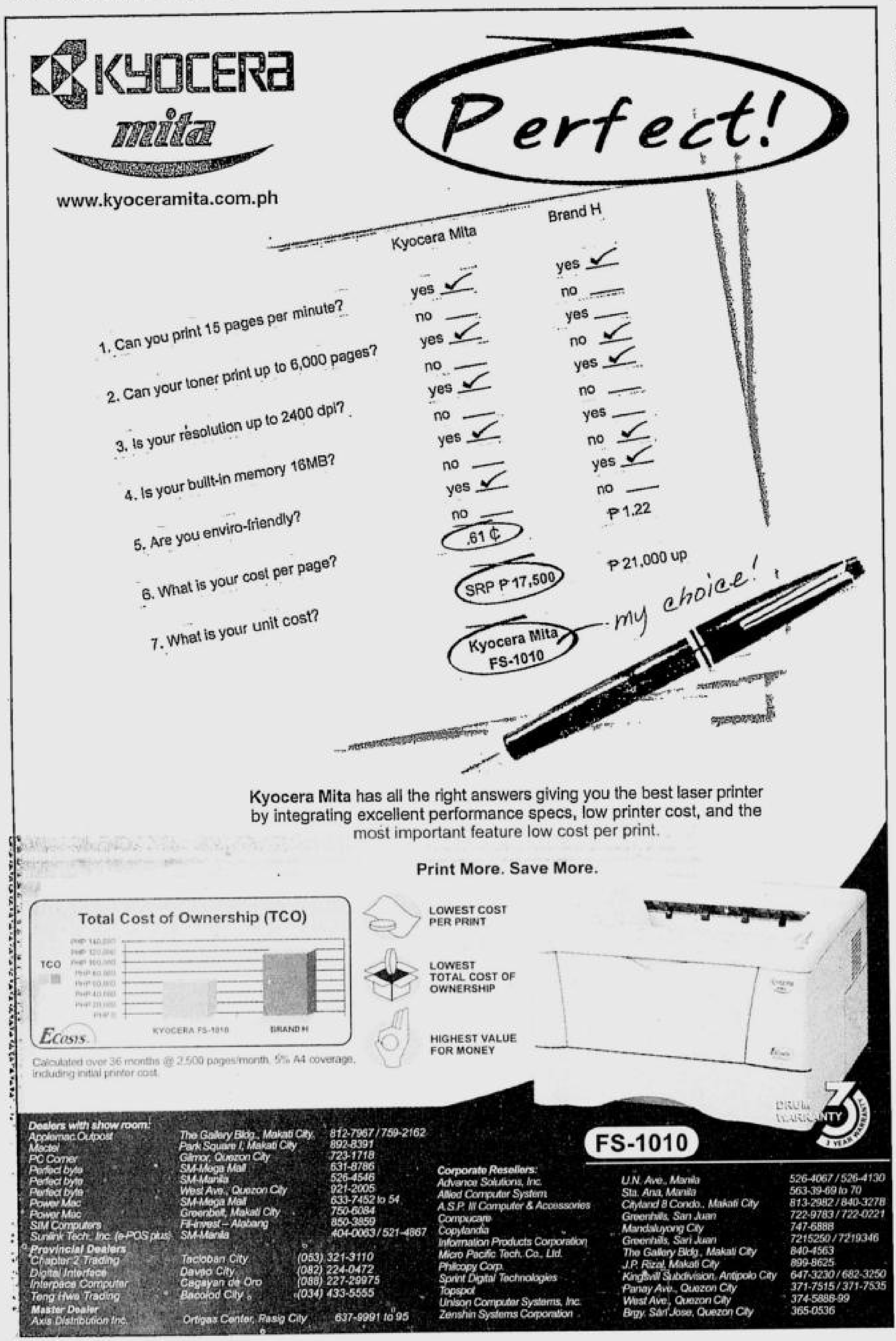
CENTRAL Bay Reclamation and Development Corp. (Cyber Bay or formerly Amari Coastal Bay Development Corp.) has appealed the recent Supreme Court decision which nullified the real estate company's contract with the Philippine Estate Authority (PEA) to reclaim some 750 hectares of land from the shores of Manila Bay.

The high court earlier nullified the amended joint-venture contract between PEA and Amari citing, among others, that reclaimed lands are public domain and could not be sold to private enterprises.

Cyber Bay, however, said in its appeal dated May 15, 2003, that it believed the case deserved a second review because:

- The high court failed to appreciate that even before its first decision on July 9, 2002, there had been no judicial doctrine that "reclaimed lands are lands of public domain and therefore cannot be

CYBER/ B7



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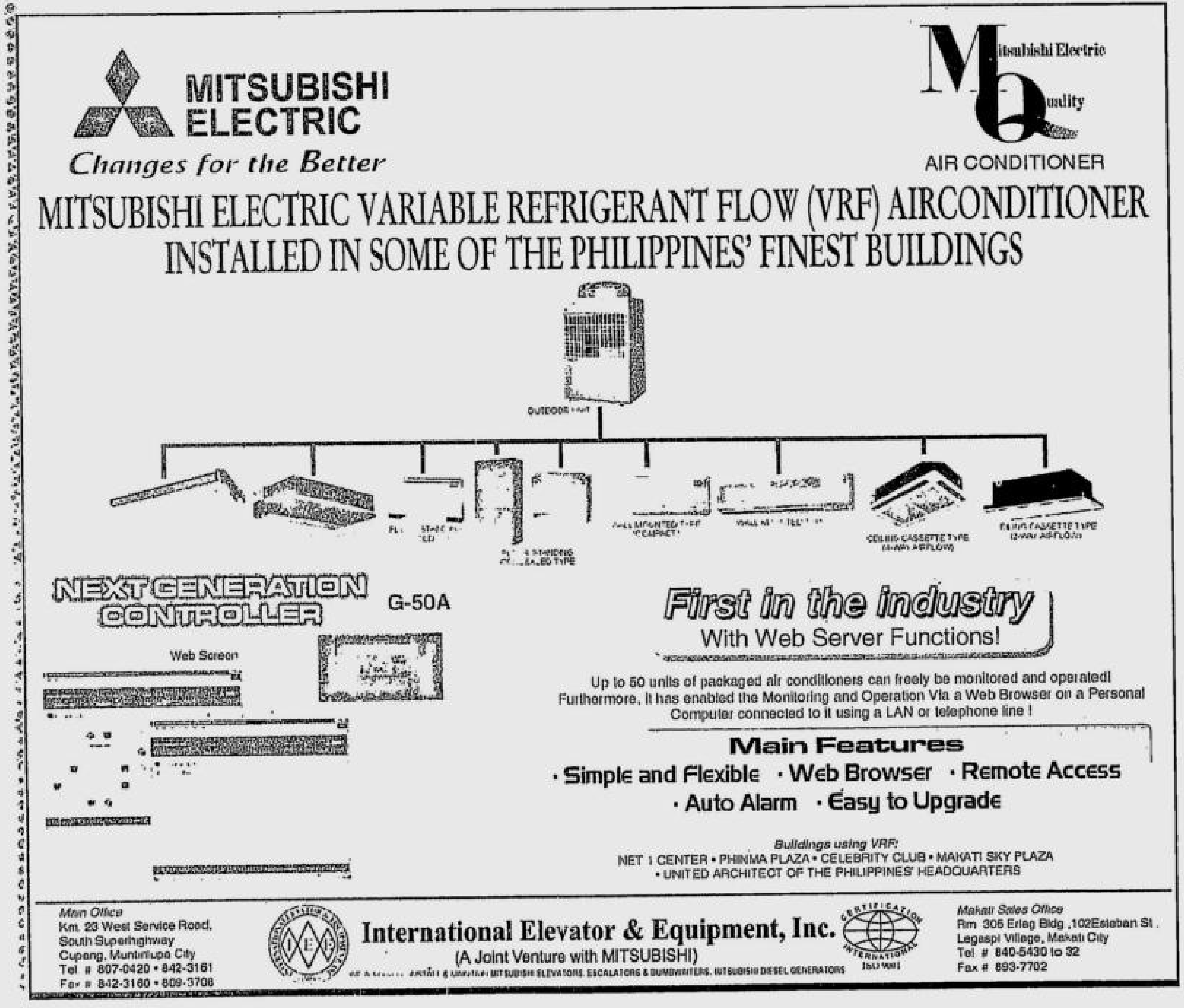

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Gov't defers hike in sugar tariff

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

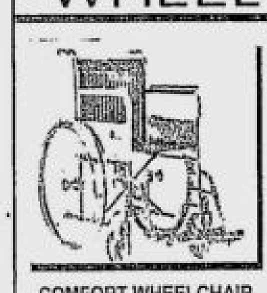
A DRAFT executive order raising the duty on sugar has been put on hold due to a sour dispute between the departments of Trade and Industry and of Agriculture on whether to maintain government's pampering of the old sweetener industry.

The proposed EO, which would raise the bound rate or maximum duty on sugar from 65 percent to 80 percent for the next 10 years, was supposed to be issued during Congress' break next month and before the most favored nation rate (or tariffs slapped on non-Asean goods) on sugar falls to 50 percent in July. (The Philippines also grants a 50-percent duty on sugar brought in under the minimum access volume program).

A government source said the DA was not too keen on seeking a tariff increase for sugar with the World Trade Organization because other sugar-producing countries such as Australia and Brazil would demand a tradeoff in other agricultural products.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II has pushed for an increase in the country's bound rate on sugar that would allow the Philippines to maintain to at least the current 65-percent duty on sugar to shield industry players from stiff competition while they undertake their promised modernization and expansion programs for their mills and plantations.

Roxas had already succeeded in moving sugar into the sensitive list of agriculture products under the Asean Free Trade Agreement, which allowed the Philippines to delay the reduction on sugar duty from the current range of 50-65 percent to 5 percent this year.



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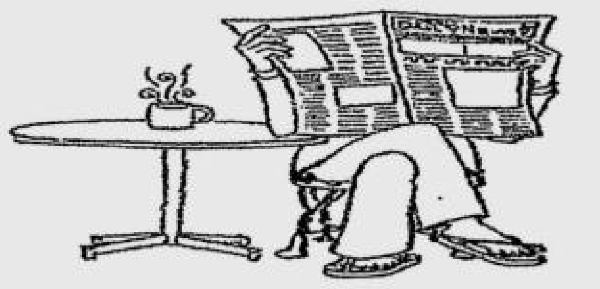

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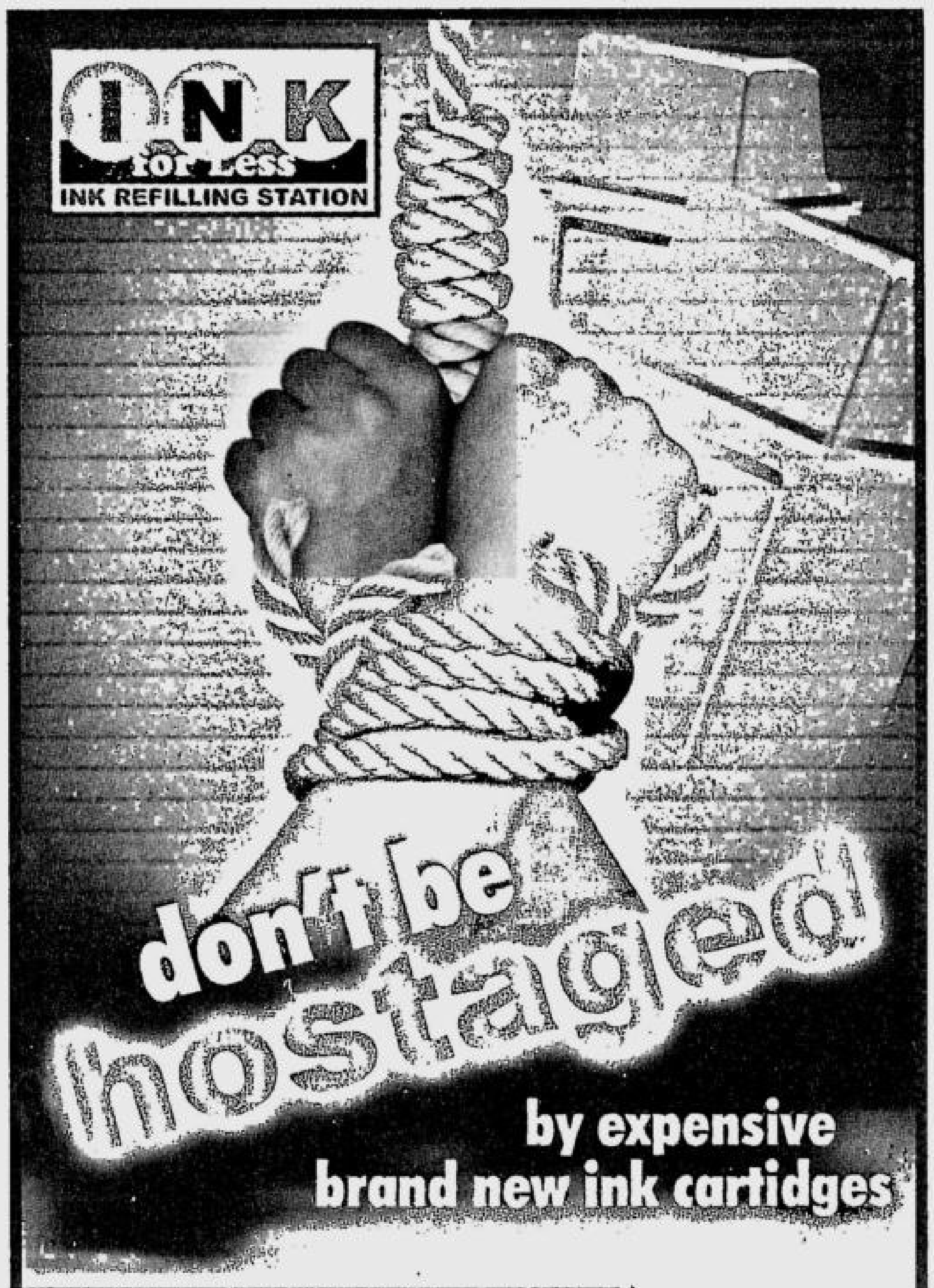

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Solons give away money that is not theirs

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

IF I have said it once, I have said it a million times before: our lawmakers are, oh, so generous—with money that is not theirs.

Three bills and a resolution are pending in the House seeking to give away money owned, not by the solons or the government, but by the members of SSS, GSIS and Pag-Ibig.

HB 2740, by Rep. Prospero Nograles, and HB 4748, by Representative Biazon, seek to grant a three-year moratorium on the foreclosure of low-cost housing units mortgaged to any of the government institutions and agencies involved in the national shelter program.

HB 4264, by Representative Zubiri, will grant a three-year moratorium on all low-cost housing loans with the government institutions and agencies. Resolution 45, by Representative Solis will extend the condonation of penalties on past due housing loans.

The Social Security System, which has P30 billion in bad loans, the biggest chunk of the past-due housing loans, has objected to certain provisions in the consolidated bill. Those loans are one of the biggest reasons why average pensions account for about 35 percent of minimum wage.

First, the bill provides that all housing loans that have a six-month unpaid monthly amortization will be covered. SSS says that borrowers will just simply postpone paying their monthly amortization for six months to avail themselves of any benefits in the bill.

Second, the bill says that all penalties and surcharges shall be condoned upon application. SSS wants the penalties and surcharges condoned on approval of the application, since applications will not automatically mean qualification.

Third, a borrower shall be entitled to a 40-percent discount on accrued interest for fully updating the account, or a 20 percent discount on accrued inters for updating at least 25 percent of the account.

This is what I mean when our solons are giving away money that is not theirs. The interest earned by SSS is the property of the members. It is plowed back to the Investment Trust Fund to enhance benefits. Besides, three previous, similar condonation schemes have failed to bring down delinquency.

Why should the delinquent borrower update his account? In a few more years, some well-meaning but misguided congressman will file another bill to launch a new condonation scheme. In other words, condonation of penalties and surcharges encourages delinquency.

Here is the biggest giveaway. The bill will allow a borrower to use the total accumulated value of his membership contribution or savings to pay his housing loan in full or in part.

At SSS, a member's contribution equivalent to 8.4 percent of salary is distributed as follows: 3.4 percent for death and disability, 5 percent for pensions. The 3.4-percent portion is paid out every year to help pay for those who die or are disabled.

Only the amount reserved for pensions—and only a share of it—is available for loans. When a member takes out a housing loan, he uses not only his personal pension reserve but, more so, the reserves or those who do not borrow.

How can a member borrow his past and future contributions, not to mention the contribution of the millions of members who do not borrow, and then use his contribution to pay for the loan? Besides, the minimum P250,000 loan amount is more than what the member will hope to pay up to retirement.

In other words, the borrower has no more money at SSS. He already borrowed it—and the money of those who do not borrow—to pay for his housing unit.

As chair of the Committee on Housing and Urban Development, Congressman Nograles spearheads the move to condone penalties and surcharges of delinquent housing unit borrowers. But his concern is sorely misplaced. The proposed condonation, just like all previous schemes, is at the expense of the larger number of members who do not borrow.

There are about 8,000 delinquent housing loan accounts in Nograles' district in Davao del Sur. This is a big problem for SSS. But, in Southern Mindanao, there are over 1,800,000 members.

Nograles had better review his political mathematics. In trying to please a few thousand delinquent borrowers, he might get swamped away by his larger constituency of non-borrowers.

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Local steel firms to make NSC preferred supplier

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

LOCAL steel makers have committed to make National Steel Corp. their preferred supplier of raw materials to dissuade the government from raising steel tariffs to revive the debt-ridden company.

Philippine Iron and Steel Institute president Welling Y. Tong said: "We would support NSC once it resumes normal operations by patronizing their products as long as these are priced competitively, meet quality standards, and delivered on time."

NSC's high prices, poor product quality and late deliveries have caused local steel makers to rely more on Russian steel imports, which ultimately led to the closure of its Iligan factory in November 1999.

Tong, who is also chair of South East Asia Iron and Steel Institute, said assuring NSC's prospective investors of a ready market was a better alternative to the government's plan to jack up duties on NSC steel products—hot and cold rolled coils, tinplates, billets—to as much as 20 percent to lure in a new investor to revive NSC.

Tong said the government should be guided by he US experience when Washington increased steel tariffs to up to 30 percent to repel cheap steel imports.

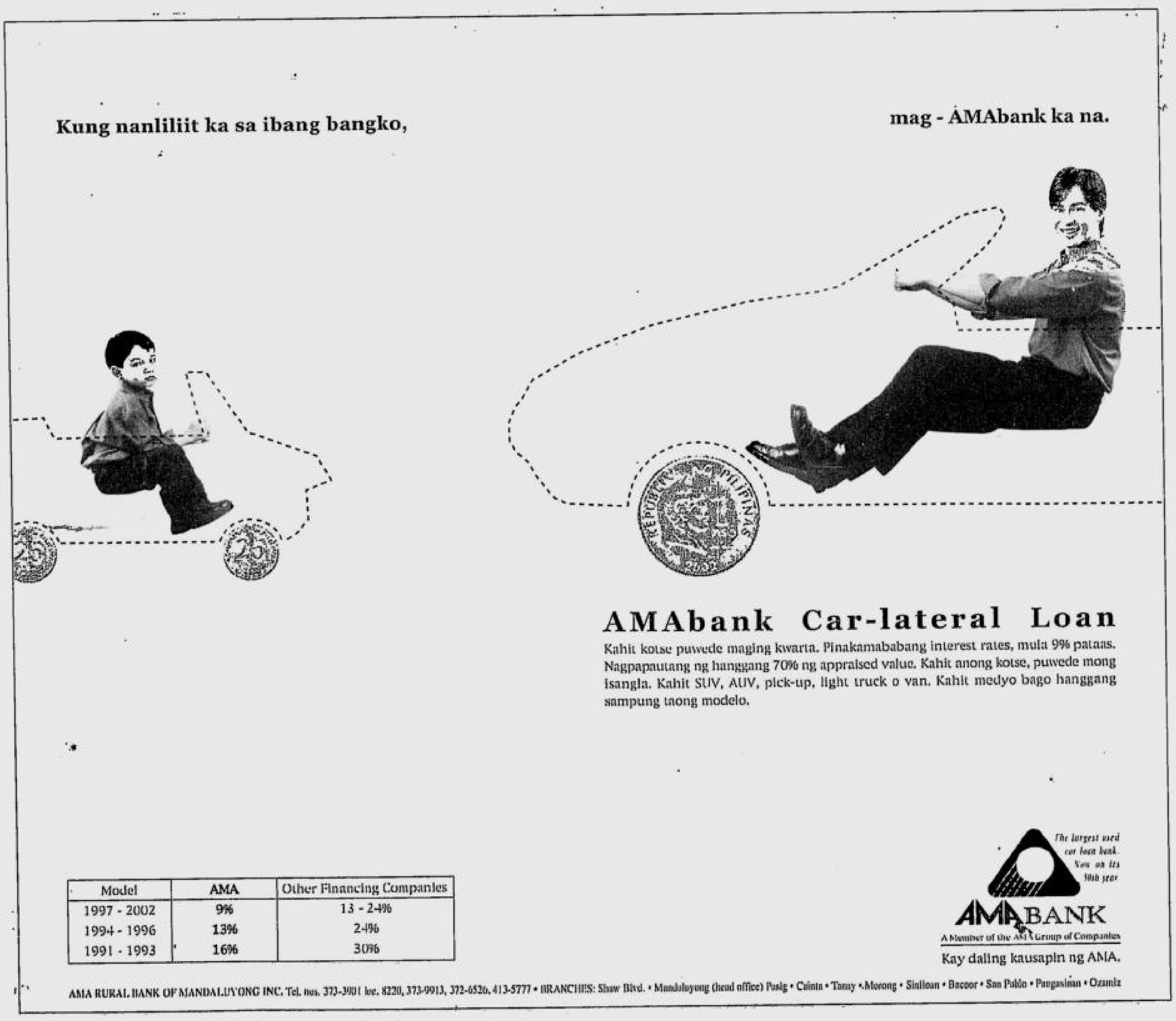
He said the tariff protection saved between 5,000 and 9,000 jobs in the upstream steel industry but it led to massive lay-offs of between 36,000 and 74,000 in the downstream steel industry and manufacturing sectors that had to close down after high raw material costs made their operations unprofitable.

Tong said NSC's reopening could generate 2,500 new jobs but it could also affect 782 steel companies that employ as many as 62,000.

"If this happens, even the local banking industry will be adversely affected since banks have to face a bigger loan crisis that what they experienced with the closure of NSC," Tong said.

NSC is one the verge of completing its restructuring program that would pare down its debts from P18 billion (the biggest non-performing loan of banks) to P2 billion after the Malaysian owners, Danaharta, agreed to dilute their shares and hand over control to creditor banks.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II, which initiated the settlement agreement between Danaharta and local creditors, reported that the government would provide tariff support to help NSC get back on its feet.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Model	AMA	Other Financing Companies
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1994 - 1996	13%	24%
1991 - 1993	16%	30%

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Extension ...

From page B1

merit and not in any way due to the perceived influence of the United States on the Macapagal administration, the finance official said.

"We may have to extend the PPM for another year or two because we are not out of the woods yet. But I don't see the need to enter into another program," said a top government official.

The option of extending the post-loan arrangement is already being discussed with the IMF.

The PPM required the IMF to conduct a twice-a-year review of the country's progress, using its prescriptions and the government's target as basis in rating the Philippines' performance.

The Philippines could exit from the PPM with the Fund late this year or early next year as its outstanding obligations with the IMF are scheduled to go down below 100 percent of its quota by November.

Until such time, the country could not end the PPM, a program the IMF requires countries ending a loan arrangement until the obligation falls below the quota.

The Philippines ended a three-year, $1.4-billion loan program with the IMF in late 2000 although it was unable to get the last tranche of $310 million after the government failed to contain the budget deficit at P62.5 billion. The budget deficit in 2000 reached P136.1 billion.

The country's IMF quota is equivalent to 879.9 million SDRs or special drawing rights, the Fund's currency that is equivalent to a little more than $1 each.

The process of ending the PPM could take until the first quarter of 2004 as necessary approvals, including that of the IMF board, had to be secured.

A staff monitored program is also a no-loan arrangement with the IMF where a team reviews the country's progress on a bi-annual basis just like in the PPM.

This program is recommended for IMF-member countries that are not necessarily coming from a loan transition but may need the Fund's stamp of approval to satisfy demand of creditors and investors.

Among the members of the IMF, the Philippines holds the distinction of having forged the longest series of programs with the Fund starting 1962. *Clarissa S. Batino*

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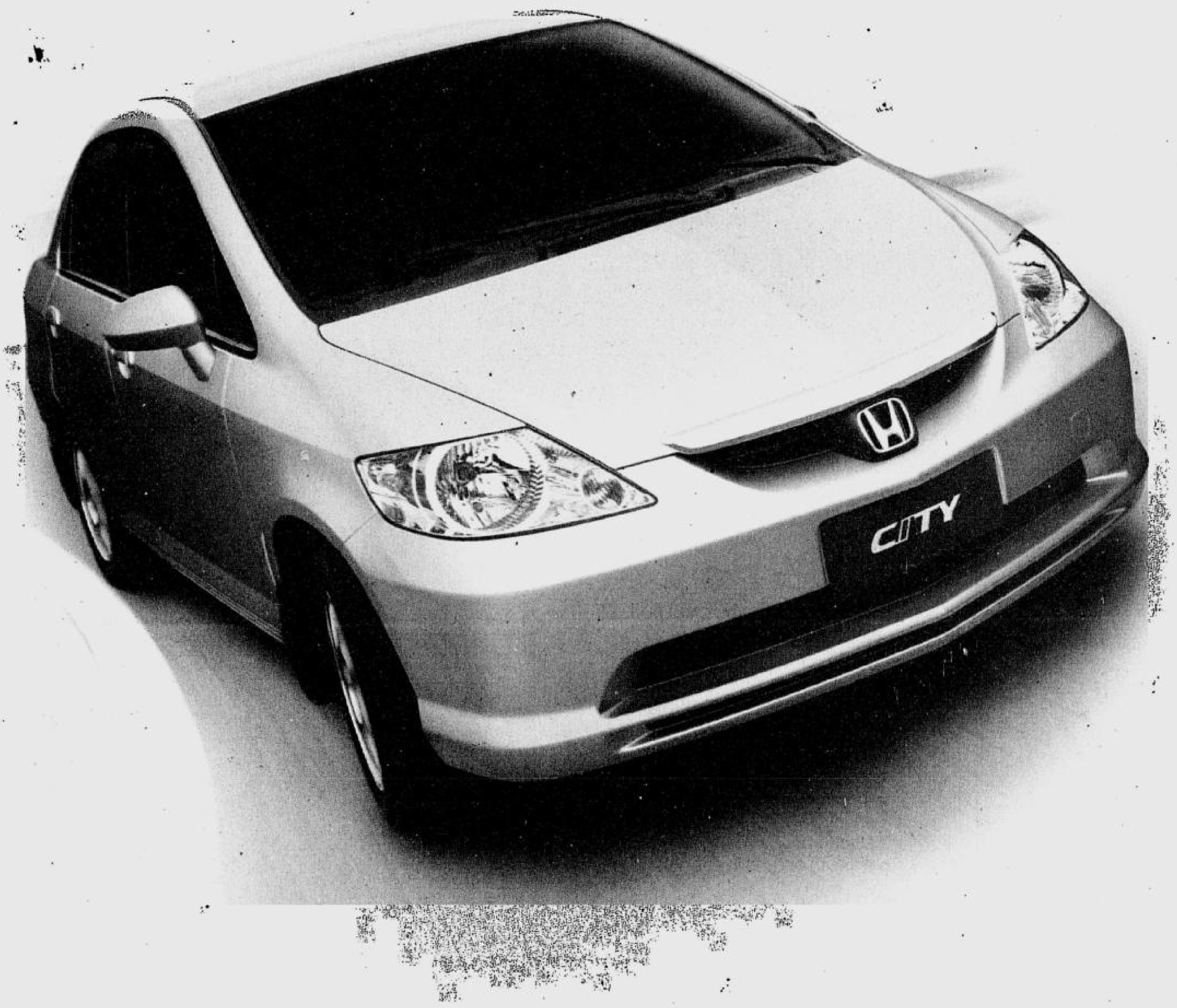

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PSE OKs rules on public float limit, negative owners' equity

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE NEWLY elected Philippine Stock Exchange board has approved the guidelines on the rules on minimum public float and negative stockholders equity, violations of which are grounds for delisting.

The implementing rules and regulations are in preparation for the planned tightening of the PSE's delisting procedures by December 2005.

The minimum public float rule prescribes the level of ownership that an issuer must keep in public hands depending on the size of the company. The rule is currently suspended but the suspension will expire within the next two years.

Based on the guidelines approved by the board, the issuer must comply with the minimum float rule within two years from the lifting of the suspension.

Any company found violating the rule must comply within 60 calendar days from receipt of notice from the PSE or pay P10,000 for each day of non-compliance, commencing on the first day after the lapse of the 60-day grace period.

If the company still fails to comply within 30 days after the lapse of the grace period, the trading of its shares shall be automatically suspended.

Upon the expiration of the additional 30-day period, the shares trading shall be suspended for 30 days, during which the monetary penalty shall no longer apply.

After the lapse of the 30-day period of suspension and the issuer still fails to comply, the PSE shall initiate delisting procedures.

On the other hand, any related party transaction entered by the company to comply with the rule—such as private placements—must be promptly disclosed to the exchange.

Under the PSE's rules, a listed company may also be considered for delisting if its stockholders' equity becomes negative. This rule, however, is likewise suspended until 2005.

Based on the new guidelines, a company suffering from this financial condition based on the latest audited financial statements prior to 2005 must submit to the PSE within 60 working days that the rule is reactivated a plan detailing the activities it will undertake to bring back the stockholders' equity to a positive position.

Within a year, the issuer must secure the requisite approvals, if needed, from the government agencies, its shareholders, an approval in-principle from creditors, and implement the remaining activities outlined in its plan.

A company which shall fall into negative equity after the effectivity of the rule in 2005, on the other hand, will have to submit its business plan within 30 working days and secure the approvals within one year after such submission.

CORPORATE EARNINGS

By Elena R. Torrijos

RFM posts net loss of P150M

RFM Corp., the flagship holding company of the Concepcion family, posted a net loss of P150 million in the first quarter of this year, reversing the P6.25-billion profit posted the year before on non-recurring gain.

RFM said that consolidated net sales in the quarter amounted to P1.89 billion or 2 percent lower than the comparative figure last year, largely because of continuing difficulties in the group's chicken business.

The company, however, pointed out that its branded food group, which include beverages, hotdogs and powdered juices, posted an 11 percent increase in net sales.

Empire East nets P25.5M

PUBLICLY listed Empire East Land Holdings Inc., a unit of the Megaworld group, said it earned a profit of P25.5 million in the first quarter of this year, lower than the P35 million posted in the same period last year.

Total revenue for the quarter fell to P145.6 million from P157 million last year.

EELH attributed the net decrease in total revenue partly to the percentage of completion and a more competitive atmosphere in the housing market in terms of price and payment scheme.

The property firm said sales were derived from Laguna BelAir 3, Greenhills Garden Square, California Garden Square and Xavier Hills.

FLI profit drops to P104M

FILINVEST Land Inc. of the Gotianun family reported that its net income in the first quarter fell to P104.17 million from P141.46 million in the same period last year.

In documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the listed property firm said that the profit decline was because of lower gross profit realized from prior year's sales and deferral of higher portion of profit from current period's sales.

The publicly listed property firm said that real estate sales for the period grew 24 percent to P438.97 million from P354.6 million.

Benpres net income surges to P133M

BENPRES Holdings Corp., the flagship holding company of the Lopez family, said its profit in the first quarter of this year shot up to P133 million or 6,550 percent higher than the P2 million posted in the comparative period last year.

This came on the back of the improved performance of power unit First Philippine Holdings Inc. and media network ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.

Consolidated revenue of Benpres grew 14 percent to P562 million.

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 16, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4	4	4	4	5,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	15	15	15	15	11,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	35	35	34.5	34.5	190,800
China Banking Corp.	685	685	685	685	490
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	23.5	23.5	23.5	23.5	90,600
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27	27.5	27	27.5	105,800
Philippine National Bank	23.75	23.75	23.25	23.25	40,500
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	16,100
Security Bank Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	24,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	23,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	5,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1430	1450	1430	1430	60
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1040	1055	1040	1050	1,660
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.75	2,200
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.71	0.71	0.7	0.71	2,230,000
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	560	560	560	560	5,910
ISM Communications Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.017	0.017	5,400,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3	3	3	3	10,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	1,340,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	405	415	405	415	147,430
Ivantage Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.37	450,000
Philweb Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	13,200,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	131,000
Manila Electric Co. B	10	10	9.9	10	324,000
Petron Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.06	2.06	1,502,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.55	2.6	2.55	2.6	2,900,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	350,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	2,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.72	0.73	0.72	0.72	230,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	10,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	31,400
Jollibee Foods Corp.	15.5	15.75	15.5	15.75	10,600
San Miguel Corp. A	55	55	54.5	55	7,000
San Miguel Corp. B	66.5	66.5	66	66	87,300
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.15	4.15	4.15	4.15	409,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	1,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.14	2.14	2.04	2.06	200,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.105	0.12	0.1	0.12	800,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.21	0.22	0.205	0.22	7,990,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.13	0.15	0.13	0.15	500,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.055	0.055	0.055	0.055	2,000,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.19	0.19	1,450,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	8.2	8.2	8.1	8.1	267,000
Ionics Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.58	0.58	630,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.46	1.46	1.42	1.42	200,000
Macroasia Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	20,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.01	0.01	0.009	0.009	3,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.57	1,040,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.165	0.17	0.165	0.17	480,000
Music Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	1,190,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	11,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	40,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	1	1	1	1	10,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	79,200
Steniel Manufacturing	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	150,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	150,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	200,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.23	0.28	0.23	0.28	4,970,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	11.75	12	11.75	12	83,000
PLDT 10% Pref Series Bb	10	10	10	10	1,000
WGA - Preferred	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	1,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	5,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.75	4.85	4.75	4.85	9,040,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.12	0.13	0.12	0.13	1,550,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	50,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.84	0.85	0.84	0.85	1,440,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.28	1.28	27,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.9	4.9	4.85	4.9	1,693,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1	1	1	1	110,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	0.0032	5,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	420,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	10,000,000
Pacifica	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	2,000,000
Pacifica B	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	2,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	517,610	15,671,275.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	55,357,040	100,415,205.00
PRO	13,900,000	53,260,860.00
Mining	10,540,000	252,600.00
OIL	15,000,000	57,800.00
GRAND TOTALS:	95,314,650	169,657,740.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	353.87	DOWN 0.72
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,565.66	UP 3.12
PRO	437.35	UP 4.48
Mining	1,165.46	UP 2.30
OIL	1.19	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	684.28	DOWN 4.64
Composite	1,059.53	UP 2.39

NO. OF ADVANCES: 25; NO. OF DECLINES: 29; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 27; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 81; NO. OF TRADES: 1,061

CURRENCIES

May 18, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.878426	1.000000	52.130000
Japan	Yen	0.007540	0.008583	0.447400
United Kingdom	Pound	1.424807	1.622000	84.554900
Hongkong	Dollar	0.112634	0.128222	6.684200
Switzerland	Franc	0.663063	0.754831	39.349300
Canada	Dollar	0.635436	0.723380	37.709800
Singapore	Dollar	0.510921	0.581632	30.320500
Australia	Dollar	0.566398	0.644787	33.612700
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.330166	2.652661	138.283200
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.234241	0.266660	13.901000
Brunei	Dollar	0.509439	0.579945	30.232500
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000104	0.000118	0.006200
Thailand	Baht	0.020915	0.023810	1.241200
UAE	Dirham	0.239177	0.272279	14.193900
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.138400	59.344800
Argentina	Peso	0.310398	0.353357	18.420500
Brazil	Real	0.300213	0.341763	17.816100
Denmark	Kroner	0.134674	0.153313	7.992200
India	Rupee	0.018678	0.021263	1.108400
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.231196	0.263193	13.720300
Mexico	New Peso	0.084286	0.095951	5.001900
New Zealand	Dollar	0.503338	0.573000	29.870500
Norway	Kroner	0.127565	0.145220	7.570300
Pakistan	Rupee	0.015245	0.017355	0.904700
South Africa	Rand	0.110474	0.125764	6.556100
Korea	Won	0.000734	0.000836	0.043600
Sweden	Kroner	0.108999	0.124085	6.468600
Syria	Pound	0.020915	0.023810	1.241200
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025425	0.028944	1.508900
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000551	0.000627	0.032700

Stocks seen drifting ...

From page B1

met or beat market expectations, BPI Securities said, were Jollibee Foods Corp., Globe Telecom, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., First Philippine Holdings and Benpres Holdings Corp.

"The market remains short-term bearish as the immediate downtrend line is intact with the trend line resistance at 1,068," BPI Securities said.

Philstocks.net agreed that the market would trade sideways as it continued to be hounded by uncertainties.

"Bulk of the uncertain environment rests on the domestic political picture. There is still no clear presidential candidate that has stepped forward," Philstocks.net said.

"On the economic front, the market is not expected to gain enough traction without a confirmation of a stronger economy," it said.

The National Economic and Development Authority is set to release the first-quarter GDP report on May 29.

But Philstocks.net said the government already reported a not-so-good preview of the first-quarter economic report with a growth of only 2.7 percent for the agriculture sector, compared to the 5.24 percent a year ago.

Doris C. Dumlao

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Mimosa Indiv/Corp 120,000/270
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FONTANA "D"	50K	-
FOREST HILLS "A"	-	155K
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Baguio Country Club	650,000	600,000
Camp John Hay	220,000	Pls. Call
Canyon Woods	160,000	Pls. Call
Capitol Hills	-	110,000
Calatagan Golf Club A/B**	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Celebrity Sports Club	160,000	150,000
Club Filipino	150,000	-
Eagleridge "A*"/"B**"/"C***"	270,000/450,000**	220,000
Eastridge "B"	150,000	-
Evercrest	100,000	-
Fontana B/C*/A**	70,000/140,000*/230,000**	-
Forest Hills "A"/"B"/"C"**	230,000*/250,000**	175,000/220,000**
Manila Golf Ind./Corp.*	-	11,000,000*
Manila Polo	2,500,000	-
Makati Sports Club A/B*	-	200,000
Manila Yacht Club	610,000	-
Manila Southwoods A/B*	540,000	450,000
Metropolitan Club	100,000	90,000
Mimosa Golf Ind./Corp.*	-	95,000/265,000*
Montemar Beach Club	-	15,000
Mt. Malarayat Ind./Corp.*	300,000	-
Orchard Golf A/B*	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Phil. Columbian	70,000	-
Puerto Azul "A"/"B"	100,000/150,000*	-
Punta Fuego	500,000	400,000
Quezon City Sports Club "A"	220,000	-
Riviera Golf "A"/"C"**	380,000*	-
Royale Tagaytay A/C*	Pls. Call*	-
Sherwoods "A"/"B"*/"C"**	90,000/Pls. Call*	70,000**
Sta. Elena Golf "A"/"B"	-	1,275,000
Subic Bay Yacht Club "Corp"	290,000	-
Subic Golf	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Country Club	370,000	320,000
Tagaytay Highlands Golf & CC	800,000	700,000
Tagaytay Midlands	750,000	650,000
Valley Golf & CC	300,000	250,000
Valle Verde (Indv.)	160,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	8,600,000	-

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Baguio Country Club	620,000	730,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	70,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	90,000
Camp John Hay	200,000	230,000
Canlubang	450,000	500,000
Canyonwoods	-	150,000
Capitol Hills	110,000	135,000
Celebrity Sports Club	170,000	185,000
Club Filipino	110,000	180,000
Evercrest "A"	-	80,000
Forest Hills "A"	160,000	185,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	190,000
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	250,000	275,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	Please Call	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,100,000	10,600,000
Manila Polo	-	2,400,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	Please Call	550,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	570,000	650,000
Manila Yacht Club	-	600,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	90,000	135,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	150,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	120,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	260,000	300,000
Montemar (Individual)	35,000	-
Mt. Malarayat (Individual)	-	300,000
Mt. Malarayat (Corporate)		600,000
Puerto Azul	-	100,000
Quezon City Sports Club	165,000	200,000
Rockwell	-	380,000
Royale Tagaytay "A"	-	Please Call
Sherwood Hills "A"		75,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	180,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	200,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,375,000	1,500,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	200,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	120,000
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	400,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	820,000
Tagaytay Midlands	650,000	720,000
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Repositioning in PNB

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THERE is increased backroom chatter from the Lucio Tan and government camps as the annual stockholders' meeting of Philippine National Bank, slated for May 27, approaches.

According to the latest government grapevine, the Kapitan camp is now proposing that recently retired Nestlé CEO Juan Santos be made the new PNB chair, to replace banker Francisco Dizon.

In addition, the Kapitan camp also wants ex-PDIC chair Norberto Nazareno out of the PNB board, and is proposing that the tough-talking regulator be instead elevated as CEO of the sequestered United Coconut Planters Bank.

The Cojuangco camp in San Miguel Corp., according to the grapevine, is only too happy to let Santos, a Malacañang nominee, cross over to PNB since, as a veteran sales/marketing man, the ex-Nestlé CEO could see through the rather opaque sales and marketing arrangements currently being employed in the country's largest food and beverage company.

Ironically, Dizon was originally nominated by the Kapitan camp, thinking that the banker would simply preside over the PNB board meetings like Erap-era PNB chair, ex-Chief Justice Andres Narvasa, and nothing else.

But Dizon became a hands-on chair, and started looking into the multibillion-peso bad loan portfolio of PNB, and started breathing down the necks of key PNB officers, including PNB president Lorenzo Tan.

One particular sore point, according to the grapevine, is Dizon's position on a new loan that PNB still extended to Waterfront, the listed hotel chain of plastics king William Gatchalian, despite the latter's past-due performance.

Dizon also ordered a legal audit of the various loan documentations submitted by key borrowers, even hiring an outside law firm for that purpose.

On a bigger perspective, Dizon wants PNB to refocus on retail and credit card business like the immensely profitable Citibank, but his president supposedly prefers the less manpower intensive, big-lending approach.

Unless Malacañang prevails on Dizon to soldier on, the word is that the PNB chair, who has become weary of infighting at this stage of his career, is about to throw in the towel notwithstanding a personal plea from Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho to stay on.

Firings at The Fort

THE NEW landlord of The Fort has given the walking papers for the entire officer and staff of Fort Bonifacio Development Corp.

According to the grapevine, Ayala Land has informed FBDC senior vice presidents Vicente Tinsay and Jose Lim, along with about 80 others, that their services would no longer be needed after the end of this month.

The happy note is that the retirees were all handed more than the usual severance package.

According to the grapevine, Lim will move back to his parent Metro Pacific Corp., where he is the concurrent chief financial officer, while Tinsay, a First Pacific pioneer in Hong Kong along with chair Manuel V. Pangilinan, has decided to move on and form a new business venture with other partners.

Out of the 80, Ayala Land decided to rehire less than 30 personnel but on short-term, one to three months, contracts.

Heard through the grapevine

UNLESS there is a last-minute change, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez will have lost his seat in favor of our favorite publisher in the White House dinner to be tendered by President Bush for the Macapagal-Arroyo team.

The publisher's travel sidekick, on the other hand, managed to get himself invited in the simultaneous Blair House dinner for the GMA Cabinet wives.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

Cyber Bay appeals high court ruling

From page B2

alienated in favor of private corporations. The decision should therefore be given prospective and not retroactive effect."

- The Supreme Court also did not take into account that there was no sales contract, much more a transfer of reclaimed lands to Amari under the amended joint-venture agreement (JVA).
- The high court overlooked that Amari "could not have been in bad faith in executing the amended JVA."

Cyber Bay argued that as early as the 1866 Spanish Law of Waters, the "doctrine has been that lands, if reclaimed by private persons with proper permission from the government, belong to the private persons and not to the government."

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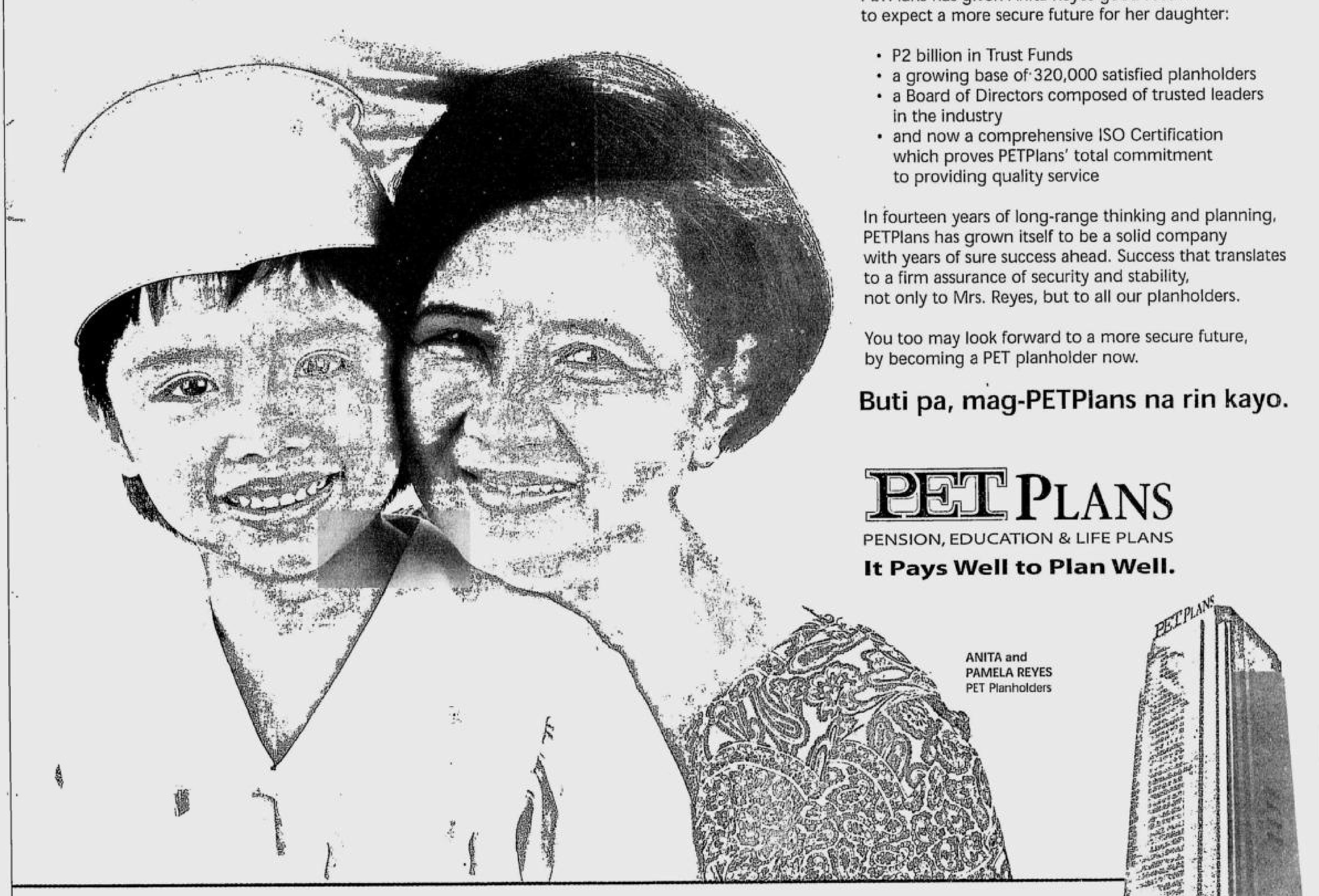

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NEW AUTO MODEL

Ford jacking up CBU exports

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FORD Motor Co., the world's No. 2 car maker, is seriously considering adding another model to its exports of completely built up units assembled in Ford's Laguna factory, according to Board of Investments Managing Head Gregory Domingo.

Domingo said he had met with Ford officials in Detroit early this month to discuss the American car maker's plan, which was contingent on the grant of export subsidies on CBU exports.

Domingo declined to say what model was Ford planning to add to its CBU exports. Ford has been shipping out the Ford Lynx sedan and the Escape sport utility vehicle to Thailand and Indonesia since last year. It is the first local assembler to export CBUs in significant numbers. Ford expects to ship out 14,000 units of the Lynx and the Escape this year.

Domingo informed the Ford officials that the BOI was currently finalizing an incentive package to encourage assemblers to export more CBUs. Assemblers are eyeing between $600 and $1,000 in subsidies per CBU vehicle exported.

Based on his discussions with Ford officials, Domingo said the Philippines needed to jack up its domestic vehicle production base to between 200,000 and 250,000 with exports accounting for at least 50,000 units.

This means that domestic output should at least double from last year's sales of 85,587 units. At this level, Domingo said assemblers believed that the Philippines could be a viable production base for vehicles even though it was the smallest among Asean's top car makers—Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

Aside from Ford, Domingo said the BOI was wooing another American car maker to set up an assembly plant in the country. He refused to name the interested investor and did not comment on speculation that the American car maker was Daimler-Chrysler.

NTC asked to cancel licenses of 3 cable firms

By Abigail L. Ho

BROADCASTING firm GMA Network Inc. is urging the National Telecommunications Commission to cancel the licenses of three Lopez-affiliated cable firms for their failure to comply with an order compelling them to restore the network's channel position in their systems.

In an omnibus motion for sanctions filed with the NTC on May 13, GMA Network pointed out that SkyCable Central CATV Inc., Phil. Home Cable Holdings Inc. and Pilipino Cable Corp. continued to ignore an April 25 order by the NTC.

The order compels all cable firms to restore the channel assignments of Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas member-stations, including GMA Network.

It further stated that the cable firms should "cease from arbitrarily changing channel assignments without advance written notice to complainant KBP members' TV stations, the public and the approval by the NTC."

Despite this, the three cable firms refused to air GMA 7 on channel 12 and instead, continued carrying it on channel 14.

However, SkyCable said in a motion for reconsideration filed with the NTC on May 15 that it could not be compelled to put GMA Network's signal back to channel 12 from channel 14 as it was the cable operator's prerogative on which channel it would carry a particular network's signal.

Keeping an eye on listed firms' financial reports

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

(First of a series)

SPECIAL REPORT

AT about this time of the year, stockholders and financial analysts troop to annual stockholders meetings of listed companies to listen to top executives discuss the financial performance of their companies in the past year.

But as Securities and Exchange Commission Chair Lilia R. Bautista advised during a recent forum, stockholders must "not believe in them (financial statements) too deeply." And there are many valid reasons to doubt.

A recent study by the University of the Philippines commissioned by the SEC on the audited 2001 financial statements of 131 publicly listed companies showed that as many as 51 have committed major violations of the SEC's reporting requirements.

Common violations

The findings of the study, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, showed that two companies, for instance, were found to have overstated the value of their intangible assets and understated amortization expenses, making their 2001 financial statements look rosier than they actually were.

At least four real estate companies were cited for having booked revenues from the sale of their assets in ways that were not consistent with generally accepted accounting principles.

Five companies did not provide provisions for doubtful receivables from affiliates and subsidiaries and as many as 31 large publicly-listed companies did not disclose information on related party transactions that would have had a significant impact on their bottom line as presented to the stockholders.

The UP study further stated that the most prevalent violation was missing or defective statement of the management's responsibility over the financial statements.

As many as 45 companies were found to be guilty of this violation and 20 firms were found to have missing or defective audit reports.

Other violations include inadequate disclosure of material information such as the mortgage of assets to secure loans, extent of liabilities, breakdown of operating expenses, summarized financial information, details on the computation of earnings per share and revaluation of plant, property and equipment.

The UP study, however, noted that these violations of accounting principles were not considered grounds to qualify the audit opinion provided by the external auditors of these listed companies.

Qualified opinion

Qualifying an audit opinion, or indicating in their audit opinion that there were items that were not in conformity with accounting principles, could have alerted the management as well as the stockholders to the possibility that the financial statements were not as they appeared to be.

External auditors, after all, are required by the Corporation Code to go over these financial statements as a protection to the investing public.

In the report of an independent auditor that accompanies the annual report of a listed company, the auditor is supposed to state that the consolidated financial statement "presents fairly, in all material respects" the financial position of the company.

The auditor bases its opinion on auditing standards generally accepted in the Philippines.

These standards require the auditor to perform an audit to determine whether the financial statement is free of material misstatement, that it truly reflects the financial position of the company.

The study, however, showed that despite the rampant violations of disclosure rules and accounting standards, as much as 75 percent of the 131 companies included in the study had unqualified opinions, 17 had unqualified opinions but with explanatory paragraphs, 11 had qualified opinions and none had adverse opinions.

Wake-up call

Of the 131 firms covered by the UP study, 64 percent were audited by SGV and Co.; 12 percent by Joaquin Cunanan and Co.; 8 percent by Punongbayan and Araullo, and 16 percent by other auditors.

There was a time when the financial statements certified by auditing firms as representative of the companies' financial position were accepted as Gospel truth. However, accounting scandals in the United States that brought down energy firm Enron Corp. and led to the closure of the revered Arthur Andersen caused a radical change in the way auditors and financial statements were perceived.

These violations of accounting principles and accounting rules, however, have been occurring for some time, but had escaped the eye of the public and of the regulators.

An earlier study of the University of the Philippines entitled "An Assessment of Financial Reporting Practices of Listed Philippine Firms," which was submitted to the Financial Executives of the Philippines in May 1997, concluded that the financial reporting control system in the Philippines needed strengthening.

"Philippine firms tended to comply only with the basic financial statement disclosure requirements of GAAP. Compared with the US companies studied, the financial statements of Philippine firms provide fewer informative disclosures on major sources of revenues, items of operating expenses and information on significant subsidiaries and equity investments," the study said.

The study further stated that there were instances of overstatement of consolidated revenues; companies not reflecting the declines in the market value of their short-term stock investments, and unadjusted earnings per share.

In effect, the financial statements failed to reflect the true financial position of these listed companies to the detriment not only of the stockholders and investors but the Philippine capital market as a whole. *(To be continued)*

SARS stunts ...

From page B1

"Imagine the impact on other restaurants and retailers," he said. "Hopefully, this is just a kneejerk reaction and that the revenues will improve and normalize."

Asked about the safeguards employed by JFC against the SARS virus in Hong Kong, Navarrete said: "It's nothing distinct from hygiene measures. The reason why it has not spread in the Philippines is that we are more hygienic. Even without SARS, we do that at the store levels and those measures are already in place."

The SARS problem, which has replaced the Iraq war as Asia's most pressing concern, has also preempted JFC's plans to venture into mainland China. Nevertheless, JFC's international expansion will continue at a slower pace.

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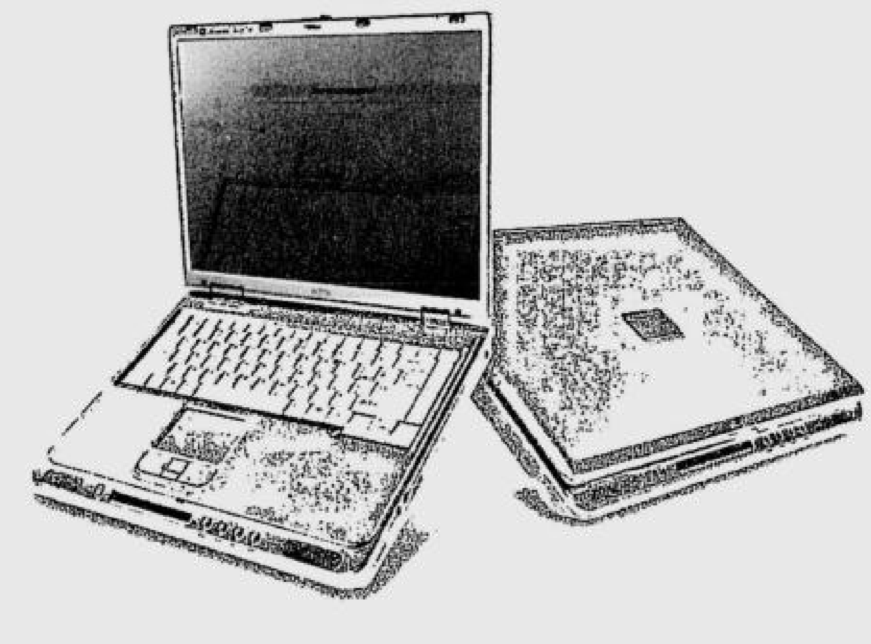
- Mobile Intel® Pentium® 4 processor - M at 2.2/1.8GHz
- 512KB L2 cache
- 14" Super XGA+ TFT Colour (Max. 1400 x 1050 pixels) / 14" XGA TFT Colour
- 512 MB / 256MB DDR266, max. 1024MB • 60/30GB HDD
- 32MB DDR VRAM • AC Link Audio (SigmaTel)
- External USB FDD • Port Replicator (Optional)
- Combo Drive (DVD & CD-R/RW) replaceable with Device Bay options
- Integrated V.90 Modem & 10/100Mbps Base-T LAN
- 802.11b Wireless LAN*
- Security Panel (for security lock & application launch)
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Weighs approx. 2.4 kg



LifeBook B2610
- Mobile Intel® Pentium® III processor 800MHz - M (Ultra Low Voltage)
- 10.4" XGA TFT Colour Touch Screen (Max. 1024 x 768 pixels) • 30GB HDD
- 256MB SD RAM, max. 256MB • 8MB VRAM
- Integrated VGA (max. 48MB w/IDMS)
- Ext. USB FDD • Integrated V.90 Modem & 10/100Mbps LAN
- Security Panel (for security lock and application launch)
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home Home
- Weighs approx. 1.34kg (with weight saver option)

LifeBook S6110/S6010
- Mobile Intel® Pentium® III processor - M at 1.2/1.0GHz
- 13.3" XGA TFT (max. 1024x768 pixels) • 40/30GB HDD
- 512/256MB SDRAM, max. 1024MB
- Integrated VGA (max. 48MB w/ IDMS)
- Max. 48MB VRAM • CD-ROM
- Combo Drive (DVD & CD-R/RW)/ CD-R/RW
- Integrated V.90 Modem & 10/100Mbps Base-T LAN
- Wireless LAN/ Optional Wireless LAN'
- Mobile Slot replaceable with options
- Security Panel (for security lock and application launch)
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Weighs approx. 1.75/1.71kg (with weight saver option)

LIFEBOOK

LifeBook C2210
- Mobile Intel® Pentium® 4 processor - M at 2.0/1.8GHz
- 15"/14.1" XGA TFT Colour • 40/30GB HDD
- 256MB DDR226, max. 768MB • SD / MS direct slot
- Internal ATI Graphics, 32/64MB Selectable
- Built-in FDD • DVD-R/RW / CD-R/RW
- Microsoft® Windows® XP Home
- Weighs approx. 3.6kg

Fujitsu recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional for Mobile Computing

* Only applicable to Lifebook E7010 model with 2.2GHz processor
' Upgrade to Wireless LAN is only available in selected countries. Wireless LAN Module to be purchased separately. Please contact your local authorised service centre for purchase and applicability of upgrade.

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US price slowdown raises deflation fears

NEW YORK—Fresh evidence of flagging inflation and a slowdown in the robust housing market in April fanned fears that deflation could further undermine the already struggling US economy.

The core Consumer Price Index rose by an unexpectedly weak 1.5 percent in April, its slowest year-over-year rate in 37 years and a fraction of last year's healthy 2.5 percent pace.

While the possibility of falling prices may appeal to consumers, deflation can cripple economies as businesses and individuals expect prices to keep falling and so refrain from investing or spending.

The specter of deflation, so far mostly confined to goods rather than services like medical care, has boosted speculation the Federal Reserve may have to cut interest rates sooner rather than later to prevent sliding prices from derailing the economy.

On a monthly basis, the core CPI was flat for a second straight month—the first time since 1982 the core measure hasn't risen in any two consecutive months. Economists had expected core CPI, which excludes volatile food and energy prices, to rise 0.2 percent.

Reuters

G8 finance leaders set to weigh local cures for global weakness

DEAUVILLE, France—The finance ministers of the leading industrial nations meeting are expected to focus on rescuing the distressed world economy, with host France pushing to think locally for global solutions.

The US dollar policy, in question after the recent sharp decline in the currency and Japanese counter-interventions, overhung Group of Eight bilateral meetings ahead of Friday night's working dinner which opened the gathering in this seaside resort on the Normandy coast in western France.

Although the US Treasury said it wanted to skirt the subject, a comment by a G8 official that the currency market issue would not figure in the group's final document was enough to accelerate the dollar's decline in New York.

The planned official silence on the dollar was seen as a green light to buy euros, pushing the euro up close to $1.16. The dollar had earlier been knocked back by deflation signs in the US and Japan.

The worrying possibility that the United States could fall prey to deflation, while currently dismissed as remote by most economists, further dampened sentiment about prospects for the G8 ministers to find a way to revitalize the increasingly globalized economy.

France, this year's president of the G8, will favor a regional approach rather than seek a coordinated action to revive the global economy, a source close to the meeting told AFP.

According to French government working papers, Paris stressed the need to have "a discussion zone by zone and country by country on reforms already realized and those that need to be pursued."

Among the reforms mentioned, the documents particularly note French pensions and German labor problems.

"It is by acting in the medium term that we will reestablish confidence and thus the conditions for a recovery in the short term," the documents said.

The postwar rebuilding of Iraq and its estimated foreign debt of $127 billion was expected to be explored Saturday by the finance ministers of Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia and the United States.

A US proposal that the G8 finance ministers ask the International Monetary Fund to tally Iraq's foreign debt was well-received, a US Treasury official said late Friday.

US Treasury Secretary John Snow floated the idea in pre-dinner bilateral meetings with counterparts Francis Mer of France, Gordon Brown of Britain and Masajuro Shiokawa of Japan, the Treasury official said.

AFP

Japan to save 5th top bank

TOKYO—The Japanese government looked set to bail out the country's fifth biggest bank on Saturday after Resona Holdings gave up attempts to revive on its own, raising more concerns about the health of the financial system.

Media reports said Osaka-based Resona would ask for, and get, a public fund injection of up to two trillion yen ($17.17 billion) in what would be a big step towards nationalization.

The capital injection would be the first for a major Japanese bank since March 1999, when the government injected 7.45 trillion yen into the nation's major banks to help stave off a crisis triggered by a slew of failures among big financial institutions.

A government source said the government would agree to fund the bank at a crisis meeting later on Saturday—the first such gathering aimed at preventing troubles at one institution from spilling over into the rest of the financial system.

Resona, created by a merger of Daiwa Bank, Asahi Bank and three smaller banks last year, would be the first bank to succumb to tougher government rules on what banks can count as capital.

"In a way, the government will be sending a positive message that it will protect big banks," said Naoto Odagiri, a credit analyst and BNP Paribas, who added that he did not expect Japan's "big four" banks to face a similar situation for now.

"The megabanks are likely to have cleared the hurdle for now, but they will be forced to come up with more steps to avoid the erosion of their capital," Odagiri said.

Resona's troubles, however, are likely to be seized upon by critics of Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi as evidence that his policies to revive the economy have flopped.

Others, like Odagiri, say the use of public funds will help prevent a melt-down of the banking system and give Japan's bad-debt laden banks time to sort out their shaky finances.

Resona's automatic teller machines were operating normally on Saturday and there were no queues of customers anxious to withdraw their savings, which are government-protected.

Reuters

New AOL Time chief upbeat

NEW YORK—Richard Parsons, taking the helm as chairman at AOL Time Warner on Friday, offered an optimistic outlook to shareholders at the annual meeting of the troubled media-entertainment giant.

"There are good reasons to be confident about the future," he told the meeting at the Lansdowne resort in Virginia.

Parsons acknowledged that the world's largest media-entertainment firm has been suffering from a weak economy, a slide in share prices, regulatory probes and a record loss for 2002, but said, "I'm cautiously optimistic."

"While nobody is happy about the stock price, I believe brighter days are ahead," Parsons said, highlighting the record box office debut for the film, "The Matrix: Reloaded," which brought in $42 million on Thursday.

"This movie's going to be huge, and that's good news for all of us," Parsons said.

The appointment of Parsons, who already named chief executive in May 2002, marks the move back to the "old media" management team at Time Warner and away from the "new media" team of Steve Case, who founded America Online and used its high stock price to engineer the merger of the two firms.

Parsons, 55, was the number-two executive to Time Warner chief Gerald Levin.

The company is trying to turn around its fortunes after a stock slide of some 80 percent since the 2001 merger, and a record loss of nearly $100 billion in 2002.

Case, 44, announced in January he would be resigning amid shareholder pressure. But he was re-elected to the company's board of directors.

Earlier this week, CNN founder Ted Turner said he quit his post of vice chairman "in disgust" at the media giant that absorbed his company.

Turner also told Fortune Magazine that he kicked himself for holding AOL Time Warner shares as he lost billions of dollars. He is concerned that his philanthropic causes will suffer.

AFP

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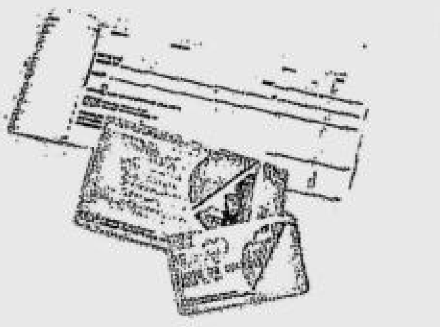

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Travel Collection Promo runs from April 7 to August 29, 2003. See promo flyers for details.
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Club BayanTel takes off with golf tournament

BAYAN Telecommunications Inc. (BayanTel) launched Club BayanTel, a loyalty program for its top corporate clients, with the 1st Club BayanTel Golf Invitational Cup held at the Tagaytay Highlands.

Club BayanTel is an exclusive circle of BayanTel's top corporate customers who will enjoy exclusive rewards and privileges such as golf tournaments, movie premieres, and other exclusive events.

Junie Pama, BayanTel vice president for corporate and business markets said he expects Club BayanTel to develop closer ties with valued clients. "While the privileges of Club BayanTel center on recreation and enjoyment as a means to reward our clients with the good life, we also see the club as a channel for us to learn more about how to best serve the needs of our customers and provide more personal and timely service."

The 1st Club BayanTel Golf Invitational Cup attracted golf enthusiasts who were also executives from top companies in the country, with BayanTel president and CEO Eugenio Lopez III leading the ceremonial tee-off.

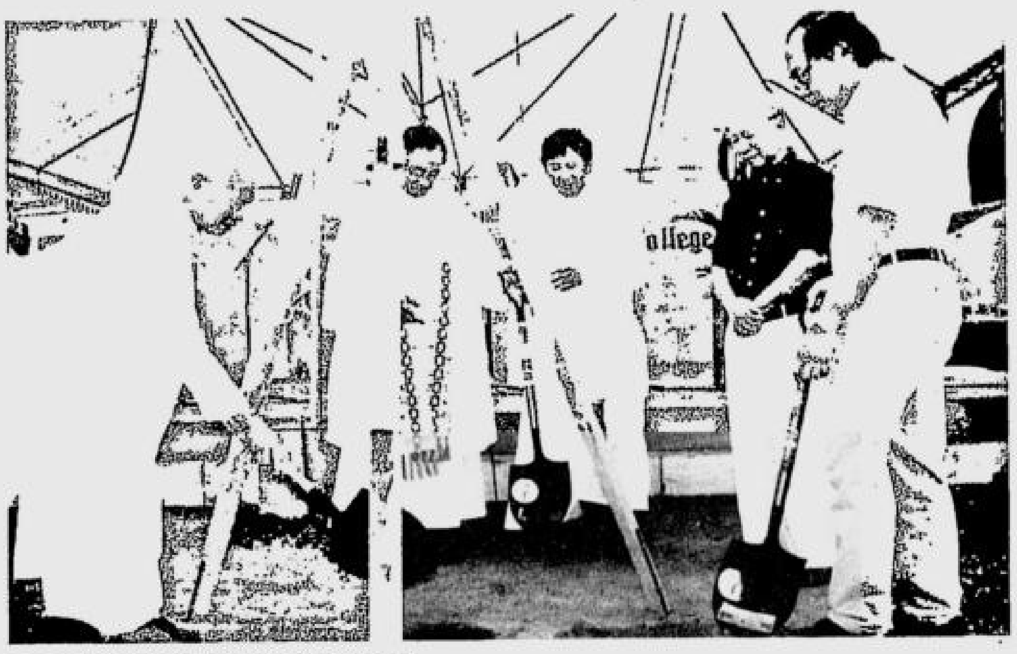
Among the golf enthusiasts who took part in the tournament were Metrobank EVP and CFO lawyer Alfredo Javellana, UCPB first vice president Edgardo Diama, and National Golf Association of the Philippines (NGAP) executive director Jake Ayson.

After the games, the golfers were treated to lunch at the Marbella Restaurant where the winners for each class were announced and prizes were given away for winners of the fun holes.

"Members of Club BayanTel should look forward to more exciting events in the future as we continue to provide ways to be better than ever," said Pama.

HEALTH EXPRESS AT ROBINSONS METRO EAST

In over 15 retail stores nationwide, Health Express is making good health more accessible. The most recent addition to its chain of wellness centers is in Robinsons Metro East where Lyn Ching-Pascual, Dr. Mayumi Pascual and Renato Figueroa headed the ribbon-cutting ceremony that officially opened Health Express' newest branch. Also present during the event was Health Express marketing manager Anna Margarita Pascual. Health Express is an innovative wellness store that offers the widest range of internationally and locally produced natural supplement for everyone's specific need. Its products include vitamins and minerals, alternative medicine, sports nutrition, and dietary supplements. For more information on Health Express, call 892-7978 or 840-1855 or visit any of its branches.



SBC RIZAL BREAKS GROUND

Nestled in the fine and rustic surroundings of Filinvest East Country in Taytay, Rizal, the sprawling campus of San Beda College Rizal is set to rise. SBC Rizal, administered by the Benedictine monks of the Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat, Manila, aims to assist the formation of its students into becoming ' 'fully human, wholly Christian and truly Filipino.' This newest addition to the distinguished Bedan academic community will formally open its grade school and high school departments starting academic year 2004-2005. Formal groundbreaking for the 10-hectare collegiate complex was conducted April 26. Shown witnessing the milestone event are from left, Rector president Fr. Anscar Chupungco OSB, Abbott chancellor Rt. Fr. Tarcisio Narciso OSB, SBC high school principal Fr. Gerard de Villa OSB, chair emeritus of Filinvest Land Inc. Andrew Gotianun and Filinvest president Joseph M. Yap.

Café Nescafe's coffee for May

SATISFY your coffee craving with Café Nescafe's Coffee of the Month: Canadian Vanilla Swirl, an enticing creation of rich vanilla-flavored coffee topped with whipped cream and crowned with a swirl of delicious caramel.

The concoction is one of Café Nescafe's Coffees of the World, a distinctive lineup of 13 concoctions representing the countries that have contributed most to the growth of Nescafe as the world's most preferred coffee.

Available hot or cold, patrons will love this concoction, which presents a perfect blend of vanilla and great-tasting Nescafe. The addition of caramel further enriches the taste evident in its heavenly aroma.

Canadian Vanilla Swirl is an ideal complement to any of Café Nescafe's delectable food offerings that include biscottis, cakes, cookies, brownies, pies, cupcakes, cheesecakes, croques and Nescafe Coffee Cake.

Enjoy the other Coffees of the World: After Eight Coffee of the United Kingdom, Coffee Amaretto of Italy, Café Viennese of Austria, Belgian Orange Coffee of Belgium, Kahlua Coffee of Mexico, Hazelnut Truffle Latte of Switzerland, Black Forest Mocha of Germany, Dutch Coffee Special of Holland, Café Brazilia of Brazil, Raspberry Truffle Latte of the United States, Jamocha of Jamaica and the Philippines' own Coffee Manila.

Café Nescafe branches are located at the Powerplant Mall in Rockwell Center, Robinsons Place Manila, Glorietta 3, Alabang Town Center, Naia Terminal 2, in the City Lifestyle Building along Timog Avenue and Robinsons Galleria.

Operating Café Nescafe is La Barista Inc., a professional food and beverage company. For comments and inquiries, visit www.nescafe.com.ph or e-mail café.nescafe@ph.nestle.com.

GlobeQuest keeps you connected

STAYING connected anytime, all the time is what Globequest, the wireline data service of Globe Telecom looks to make a reality. Globequest, through its Internet Protocol - Virtual Private Network (IP -VPN), a dedicated service that provides connections that are capable of linking multiple business sites, is certain that they will keep their clients in touch and in control of their business whenever, wherever. The IP-VPN of Globequest is the latest technology for data connection which features benefits and advantages that surpass any previous data delivery service like leased lines and frame relays. Globequest clients have also opted to use the service because although the service is offered at lower cost about 5 to 15 percent saving for the customer, the service is much more efficient, thus providing faster connection time. With Globequest's IP-VPN service, staying connected on line is the only way to go. Shown below is Portia Cruz, Globequest account manager discussing in detail Globequest's IP-VPN service to Paul Zaldriaga, Jollibee IT director, during the IP-VPN launching and party of for Globequest's valuable subscribers.

PANTENE VOTED FAVE SHAMPOO ANEW

For the 5th consecutive year, Pantene was designated as Asia's favorite shampoo and conditioner by Reader's Digest SuperBrand Awards 2003. In rites held recently at The Westin Philippine Plaza, Pantene bagged the most coveted Platinum SuperBrand award for Asia and the gold award for the Philippines as the most preferred brand in the survey's shampoo and conditioner category. The Reader's Digest SuperBrands survey, the only survey of its kind in Asia, identifies brands across 40 categories that appeal most to consumers across six markets in Asia Pacific. Rated on five criteria involving quality, value, strong image, trustworthiness, and understanding of customer needs, the Pantene brand attained platinum status by achieving a rating score of more than three times the nearest other brand in the same category. Shown is Romana Chuacaedo (center), Pantene market operations manager of Procter & Gamble Distributing Philippines Inc., receiving the award for the Philippines from Philippine Marketing Association president Leonardo Garcia Jr. and Lilet Yan, Reader's Digest advertising director for the Philippines.

MyGlobe makes personalizing your cell phone fun, exciting

NOWADAYS, a cell phone is no longer just a tool for communication. It is an extension of one's personality. To give it that extra oomph that boldly and unmistakably says "you", accessorize with MyGlobe.

MyGlobe is a mobile portal to all of Globe's value-added services. It offers a treasure trove of tones, icons and picture messages that you can easily download into your cell phone, to help you fashion a look that is an eloquent reflection of your own individuality.

Only MyGlobe has an extensive library of more than 3,000 mono and polytones, that is something every music lover can be happy about. Name your tune and MyGlobe is sure to have it. Choose from among the 20 diverse categories that run the entire gamut of the contemporary music scene. To get a complete rundown of all the available musical categories, type Globetones and send to 2333. Every downloaded ringtone will cost P15 for both prepaid and postpaid.

NOKIA
WONDER WOMAN

MyGlobe Tones has something for everyone. Mobile clubbers who feel everyday is Friday, club day will go nuts downloading Dance floorfillers. Imagine receiving calls to the big fat beats of Paul van Dyk, Chicane, Fat Boy Slim and other club music giants.

To get your swingiest and grooviest tones, text the keyword dance and send to 2345.

If the earthy, sensual allure of Latin Music is your flava, MyGlobe has the latest tones from J.Lo, Ricky Martin and Enrique Iglesias. Encode the keyword latin and send to 2345 to get a complete list of tones and their keywords.

Other categories you can choose from are: New This Week, Top 10 Hits, TV and Movies, All-Time Classics, Pop Rock, Retro, Praise, Slow Jam, Disney and OPM.

Other cool stuff from MyGlobe's box of goodies includes recognized icons that are uniquely Globe's. They comprise colored and black-and-white images from Looney Tunes, Justice League, Smiley's Warcraft and Nemesis. They can be used either as wallpaper, icons or logos. To download these graphics, text Pick to 2375.

You will receive a text message giving instructions on what keywords to use and to what numbers they must be sent. Price per download is P15 for both postpaid and prepaid lines.

No certified Trekkie or sci-fi buff can resist the attraction of spicing up his LCD screen with images of Captain Picard and company. Text the keyword Nemesis to 2211 and beam graphics of the Enterprise and crew onto your mobile handset.

Feeling blue? Let the sunny smiling face of Smiley or Bugs and the rest of the Looney Tunes gang lift your spirits up. Download these feel-good images by texting the keyword Smileys or Looney to 2375.

Let the images of Batman, Superman, Wonder Woman and the rest of the Justice League inspire you to give optimum peak performance in all of your endeavors. Text JL to 2375 to get these images.

You may also choose from a diverse collection of colored and black-and-white logos, icons and wallpapers inspired by Voltes V, Daimos, Flame of Recca, Fushigi Yugi, Ghostfighter, Lupin, Magic Knight Ravearth, Monster Rancher, Oh My Goddess, Trigun, Daredevil, Panther, Iron Man, Punisher, Rogue, Thor, X-Men and War Craft.

Text the keywords Anime or Marvel to 2211 to get pictures of your favorite anime or marvel characters. Key in Warcraft and send to 2375 to receive images inspired by the popular videogame.

Not to be forgotten are colored and black-and-white icons and wallpapers of popular NBA hoopsters. To get images of your favorite NBA cager, just text the keyword NBA to 2978 and start assembling a dream team on your cell phone.

Birthday, graduation, wedding greetings can certainly be made more fun when said by way of textcards. Instructions on how to download colored and monochromatic textcards of Garfield, Rugrats, Johnny Neutron, among others can be received by texting 2961. Price per download is P10.

ProductFILES

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THERE'S a new way for your kids to enjoy the goodness of milk. Give them new Selecta Moo Sweet Milk, the latest addition to RFM Corp.'s popular Selecta Moo milk line.

Its white, full cream milk stands out from all the other milk products because it's already sweetened to suit the tastes of children ages 5 and up. This also offers the best value to moms. Aside from providing good health and nutrition to their kids as this is already calcium-enriched, new Selecta Moo Sweet Milk is convenient. No more hassles of mixing a milk drink with more sugar and more water. There's also an assurance of safety and high quality-all at an affordable price.

New Selecta Moo Sweet Milk is now available in 125ml and 200ml Tetra Wedge Aseptic packs in leading supermarkets nationwide.

Clips

'Little Mermaid' at Ayala

"LITTLE Mermaid," the hit Filipino musical from the theater company Trumpets, is being staged at the Ayala Malls until May 25. The 3rd incarnation of "Little Mermaid" will be led by Antoinette Taus, Karylle and Noel Rayos. Taus takes on the role of the mermaid Jewel, and Karylle and Noel reprise their parts as Princess Sapphira and Prince Christian. With book and lyrics by Luna Grino Inocian and Jaime del Mundo, "Little Mermaid" is directed by theater veteran and Trumpets pioneer Audie Gemora. There will be 28 performances and will be divided among the three Ayala Malls: Ayala Center Makati, Alabang Town Center and Ayala Center Cebu. Admission is free.

Boracay model tilt

THE SUMMER heat rises as 30 stunning and gorgeous male and female Filipino models compete in the first-ever "Folio 2003: The Boracay International Model Competition" on May 24 at the beachfront of Boracay Bar and Restaurant. Event producers Folio Manila International Models+Events and Productions and System Entertainment and Catering Services (SECS) recently presented the official candidates to the press in a fashion show May 14. The public gets a chance to have a closer look at the candidates as they raid selected bars in Boracay May 20 and 22.

Faber-Castell workshops

BEGINNING April 24, Faber-Castell has been conducting workshops on animation and imagination in various branches of SM Supermalls. The workshops are open to boys and girls 7 to 11 years old. Participating children will learn how to make Filipino animation, Japanese animation and American cartoons. The remaining schedules are: May 20 at SM Southmall Storyland, May 22 to 24 at the SM Fairview Activity Center, May 27 at SM Fairview Storyland, and May 29 to 31 at the SM Pampanga Activity Center. A P50 minimum purchase of any Faber-Castell item from SM Stationery Sections and National Bookstore branches entitles a child to join one session. Present receipt on workshop day together with the school ID. This activity is supported by UP Film Center, Mowelfund and Samsung. For more information, call Faber-Castell at 361-7391/92.

Free 'X-Men 2' puzzle cards

KIDS show off puzzle boards featuring the famous characters of the movie "X-Men 2"--Wolverine, Storm, Pyro and Lady Death Strike. One can get a free puzzle board for every purchase of a dozen donuts at any participating Dunkin Donuts outlet nationwide. Offer is good until May 20.

People, Events & Products

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Aries Espinosa**

RLC awards 2 new contracts to IHG

INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group (IHG) announced that it has been awarded two new management contracts by Robinsons Land Corp. (RLC). Under the agreement, one of RLC's hotels, Manila Galleria Suites, will be rebranded into a Holiday Inn Hotel, and a Crowne Plaza hotel, which is under construction, will be launched in Ortigas Center, the newest business and commercial hub in Manila. These two new developments add to IHG's portfolio in Asia Pacific, which includes 144 hotel properties with close to 40,000 guest rooms in 22 countries in the region.

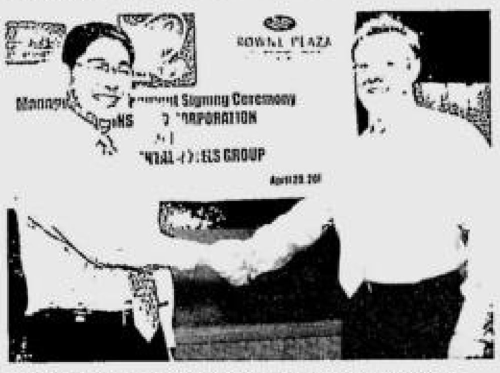
Lance Gokongwei, president and chief operating officer of RLC, said, "Exciting times are ahead for RLC-the rebranding of Manila Galleria Suites to Holiday Inn will take place on June 1 and the Crowne Plaza property will be launched in early 2005 when construction is completed. We are confident that our partnership with IHG is a positive move that will contribute to building value for our properties, our shareholders and the Philippine tourism industry. Through our agreement with IHG, we now carry two of the most recognized brands in the world and have access to IHG's industry expertise, its state-of-the-art reservations system Holidex Plus, and the group's 15 million Priority Club Rewards members".

"IHG is on the move in Asia Pacific. With the best brands for both business and leisure travelers in some of the most sought after locations in the region, the Holiday Inn and Crowne Plaza properties in Manila will complement our existing properties including the InterContinental Manila and Holiday Inn Resort Clark Field, and boost our presence in the Philippines," said A. Patrick Imbardelli, managing director of IHG Asia Pacific.

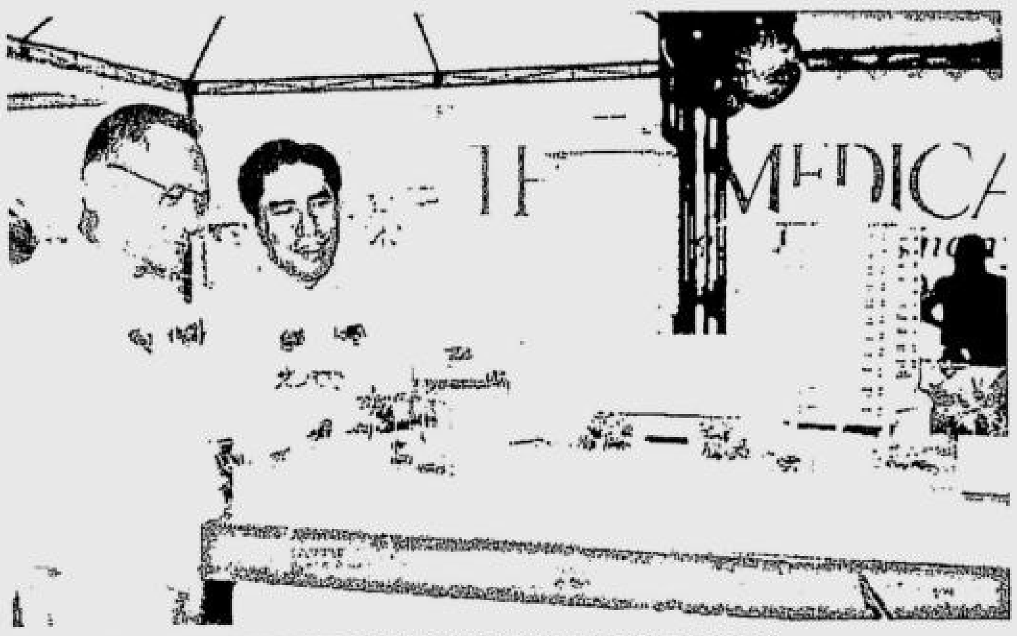
"Together with the strength of our Holiday Inn and Crowne Plaza brands, our partnership with RLC will enable us to leverage our people, infrastructure and knowledge to attract lifelong customers, enhancing revenues and returns for the properties," added Imbardelli.

Through the management contract, the 284-room Manila Galleria Suites will be rebranded to a Holiday Inn Galleria Manila in advance of a 12-month refurbishment program. The project will include the installation of facilities required by the corporate market including high-speed Internet access, conducive work spaces and recreational facilities.

The new 260-room Crowne Plaza Hotel boasts of extensive meeting facilities as well as new service initiatives to cater to the small and mid-sized meetings market. The new Crowne Plaza Hotel is under construction at a prime location at the corner of Ortigas and Asian Development Bank (ADB) Avenue.



SHOWN during the recent management agreement signing ceremony at the JG Summit Holdings Inc. headquarters at the Robinsons Equitable Tower are Lance Gokongwei (left) and Patrick Imbardelli.



THE NEW MEDICAL CITY CONSTRUCTION UNDERWAY

The construction of The New Medical City (TMC) is in full swing with the recently concluded topping-off ceremonies. The new hospital, located in the Meralco compound along Ortigas Avenue, is targeted to be operational by the 1st quarter of 2004. The New TMC boasts of a 6-story podium housing all diagnostic and intervention facilities, two 14-story nursing towers with around 700 beds at full build-out, and an 18-story Medical Arts Tower with space for around 300 clinics. Shown are TMC president and CEO Alfredo Bengzon (left) and Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit (right) viewing the scale model of the state-of-the art hospital. Construction consultants are IA Campbell & Associates Inc., Davis Langdon & Seah Philippines and Summa Kumagai Inc.-Kumagai Gumi JV. Architectural and design consultants include Francisco Mañosa & Partners, FLAD & Associates, and FMP-Archion.

EGL 1ST TO USE ICTSI MICT IBOX

International Container Terminal Services Inc. (Ictsi) and Equitable PCI Bank (EPCIB) recently presented a certificate of recognition to Eagle Global Logistics (EGL) for being the first client to use the MICT iBox, Ictsi's e-commerce website for the Manila International Container Terminal (MICT), via FastNet, EPCIB's on-line payment service. Leopoldo Dela Cruz Jr., MICT controller (3rd from left), presents the certificate to Grace Yap, EGL president (2nd from left). With them are Gregorio Severino, EPCIB assistant vice president (left), and BB del Rosario, Philippine International Seafreight Forwarders Association secretary general.

MDH LOOKS AFTER MOTHER EARTH

Manila Doctors Hospital (MDH), one of the leading healthcare institutions in the country, believes in caring for the well being of the environment as well. With this in mind, MDH president Chito Sobrepena turns over several plastic bags containing aluminum cans and plastic bottles to the Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc.'s recovery center, one of the booths accepting recyclables during the Earth Day celebration April 24at the Rockwell Club Parking, Rockwell Center, Makati City. Receiving the items was Raquel Lloren of PET Mission Recovery. Looking on are Leonides Valencia, consumer and environment affairs manager of Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. and Cherry Bautista, housekeeping executive, MDH.

BAYANTRADE SPONSORS SUPPLYLINK 2003

BayanTrade, the Philippines' premiere business-to-business e-procurement services provider, recently sponsored "SupplyLink 2003: Taking the Supply Chain to New Heights," a conference organized by the Philippine Institute for Supply Management (PISM). The purpose of the conference was to provide the means for business practitioners to keep abreast of industry trends and equip them with the tools to rapidly respond to the demands of the changing supply chain management landscape. One of those emerging trends is electronic sourcing and procurement, and BayanTrade, as a provider of e-procurement services, enables buyers and suppliers to trade goods and services on-line, real time, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. BayanTrade president and COO Dante Briones said the company enables efficient e-procurement through transaction automation, supply chain optimization, business intelligence and collaboration. Shown, from left, are BayanTrade customer relationship manager Leah Olegario, PISM president Ofelia Valerio, Briones; and PISM director Marissa Pangilinan.

ProductFILES

Pearl Coolers

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GREENWICH introduces three new flavors of Pearl Coolers to pair with your favorite pizza, pasta, chicken and Baked Rice Melt--Juicy Taro, Mango and Sweet Chocolate. Pearl Coolers is also available in your favorite Buko Pandan and Melon Flavors.

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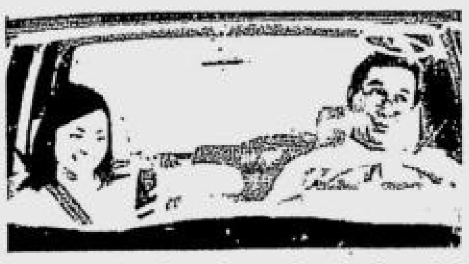

GIVE someone a gift and they would think you're thoughtful. But if you shower them with gifts on a regular basis, then they would certainly feel you're an angel. If there's a surefire way of making someone believe that for a fact and make them feel they're in heaven, that would be availing themselves of GlobeAutoload service via Visa, powered by E-store Exchange.

GlobeAutoload, a first-of-its-kind service in the Philippine telecom industry, allows Globe prepaid subscribers worry-free, on-sched automatic loading of prepaid credits charged to the subscriber's Visa credit card account. GlobeAutoload service provides you an easy and convenient way of reloading your Globe handyphone so you don't have to worry about troublesome reloading scenarios.

But why not share the blessing? You would definitely be a kindred spirit to your loved ones when you enroll them to the GlobeAutoload service. Visa cardholders are entitled to register a maximum of three recipients whose Globe Handyphones will be autoloaded on their desired dates (either 7th, 14th, 21st or 28th of the month) with any of the three denominations of prepaid credits (P250, P500 and P1,000).

Vise cardholders are privileged to avail themselves of the autoload service by filling out a registration form at any participating Globe Business Center or accredited dealer. The registration form is also available online through E-store Exchange's website www.estore-exchange.com or through E-store's IVRS (Interactive Voice Response System) by dialing the toll-free number 226 on your Globe Handyphone or 750-8080 through the landline.

A text advisory from E-store Exchange confirming the application approval with the assigned 11-digit Autoload account number will be sent to the Visa cardholder. Upon receipt of the message, he or she needs to reply with the SMS message containing his/her assigned 11-digit Autoload account number and his/her specified 6-digit numeric password.

Recipients enrolled to the GlobeAutoload service will be automatically loaded with Globe prepaid credits and a text confirmation will be sent by Globe's 2290 on the early morning of the date the autoload is scheduled to take effect. This one-time registration gives subscribers access to the luxury of staying connected and not worrying about running out of prepaid credits.

Aside from the convenience it brings, another reward from using the GlobeAutoload via Visa is the chance to win P100,000 worth of free cash credits on the cardholder's Visa credit card. Every 15th and 30th of the month, from June 15 to Nov. 30, a raffle will be drawn from the approved registered members of the GlobeAutoload via Visa service.

One raffle entry is counted for every enrolled recipient on the Visa cardholder's account. You may increase your chances of winning by simply persuading other Visa cardholders to avail themselves of the service, which will entitle you to one raffle entry per referral.

Haagen-Dazs, via Globe

LIFE'S guilty pleasures need not come with a steep price tag. Not when you are a bonafide Globe MMS subscriber, at least.

From May 4 to June 4, Globe is treating you to an experience of the rich and decadent taste of the world's finest ice cream, Haagen-Dazs, at a surprisingly low cost during its Summer Bliss promo.

Haagen-Dazs ice cream is a heavenly frozen delight, known for its rich pure flavors and smooth and creamy texture. Each indulgent spoonful is infused with a history and tradition of quality and craftsmanship enjoyed by discriminating ice cream lovers with a passion for the best.

To avail yourself of Globe's delicious treat, click the Summer Bliss link found on the myGlobe WAP site (or the home WAP page) found on MMS-capable cellphones, such as the Nokia 3530, 7650, 6100, 6610, 7210, 3650, 7250, 6800 and Sony Ericsson T68I and P800. Having done so, you will then receive an MMS message with the Summer Bliss colored icon from 2325. Save this message to purchase a scoop of any flavor of Haagen-Dazs ice cream at an astonishingly low P29.50 at any Haagen-Dazs outlet in the Metro. Globe MMS subscribers have the option of using the treat for himself or sending it to friends or loved ones.

Each Summer Bliss MMS message costs P20. Globe MMS subscribers may download and send as many Summer Bliss treats as he wants.

DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
J.P. Laurel Avenue, Bajada, Davao City
Tel. No. 221-9400 Fax No. 224-5392

INVITATION TO BID

The DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT (DCWD) invites interested bidders for the SUPPLY AND DELIVERY of One (1) unit Brand New Backhoe Loader with the following technical data:

One (1) unit Brand New Backhoe Loader, Wheel Type, made in USA, with the following specifications:

a. 73-78 Net HP (min.) natural aspirated diesel engine with automatic fanbelt tensioner, over center backhoe design.
b. 4 wheel drive-Push Button activation, hydrostatic steering
c. General Purpose 82 inches wide loader bucket, .8 to 1.0 cu.m. capacity
d. 24" wide backhoe bucket complete with teeth .18 cu.m. capacity (minimum)
e. Digging depth-14 Ft. minimum
f. Cast ductile iron backhoe center boom & swing tower with 5 years warranty
g. ROPS/FOPS canopy with front windshield with wiper and washer
h. Power shuttle synchromesh transmission with torque converter
i. With spare backhoe bucket, width 12 inches with teeth – .10 cu.m. capacity
j. With auxiliary Hydraulics-Provision-Loader side (Multi-purpose attachment)
k. With Manufacturers standard equipment and accessories & tools
l. With manual parts catalog

NOTE:
- For Philippine Exclusive Distributors, please attach certificate of exclusive distributorship
- Spare parts and after-sales services must be available locally
- Delivery must be within 30 days from receipt of P.O.
- Quoted Price must be in Philippine Peso

Quoted Price must be "DELIVERED DCWD COMPOUND"

Bids shall be addressed to the Chairman, Bid & Canvass Committee and must be received at the DWCD not later than June 5 @ 3:00 p.m. at which time and place said bids will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

Each bid must be accompanied with a 2.5% bidders bond, either in form of cash or Cashiers/Managers check from an accepted bank based in Davao City.

The DCWD reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality in such bids and to accept such bids most advantageous to the District.

(Sgd.) ALFONSO E. LAID
Asst. Gen. Manager for Administration
Chairman, Bids & Canvass Committee

(PDI–May 19 & 26, 2003)

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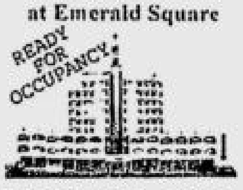

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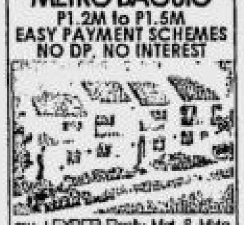

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), PSALM with office address at 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City invites duly licensed Hardware and Software Suppliers, Certified CISCO Systems Integrator and 1st tiered and Internet Service Providers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following requirements:

I. PROJECT NAME : PROCUREMENT OF HARDWARE AND CONNECTIVITY FOR PSALM'S ELECTRICITY TRADING, SETTLEMENTS/TREASURY AND ACCOUNTING SYSTEMS
  1. SCHEDULE I : Desktop and Notebook Computers, Printers & Fingerprint ID System
  2. SCHEDULE II : Clustered Servers, UPS, Backup System and Anti-virus Software
  3. SCHEDULE III : Cisco Routers, Switches and Structured Cabling Works
  4. SCHEDULE IV : Leased Line Connections by Internet Service Provider

II. BIDDING SCHEDULE : SINGLE STAGE BIDDING PROCESS
  1. ISSUANCE OF BID DOCUMENTS : May 19- June 3, 2003
  2. PRE-BID CONFERENCE : May 28, 2003/ PSALM Conference Room 2:00 PM
  3. SUBMISSION OF PROPOSALS : June 10, 2003
  4. ELECTRONIC BIDDING : To be announced

NOTE : Interested Bidders may request clarifications in writing if unable to attend the pre-bid conference.

III. The complete package of Tender Documents shall be issued to duly licensed Suppliers/Firms who submitted a Letter of Intent to participate in the bidding within seven (7) working days after the last day of advertisement in newspapers and/or posting on DBM/DOE/PSALM Websites of this Invitation.

All interested bidders may secure the bidding documents from the PSALM BAC Secretariat located at the 2nd Floor, SGV II Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City starting May 19, 2003 after payment of a non-refundable amount of **Five Thousand Pesos (P 5,000.00)**. Inquiries and/or clarifications to the eligibility and bidding requirements may be addressed to the Chairman, BAC at Tel. No. 817-00-37.

IV. **PSALM** reserves the right to reject any or all bids at any time prior to award of contract, waive any defects therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation, without thereby incurring any of the following:
  a. liability whatsoever to offset expenses or losses the bidder may incur in the preparation of the bids;
  b. obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the basis of the BAC's action.

V. **The approved budget for the contracts are as follows:**
  1. SCHEDULE I : Eight Million Seven Hundred Ninety Thousand Pesos (P8,790,000)
  2. SCHEDULE II : Thirty One Million Three Hundred Fifty Thousand (P 31,350,000)
  3. SCHEDULE III : Twenty Three Million Three Hundred Eighty Six Thousand (P 23,386,000)
  4. SCHEDULE IV : Six Million Seven Hundred Fifty Six Thousand (P 6,756,000)

(SGD.) HELEN E.V. SAN PEDRO
Chairperson, BAC

(PDI – May 19 & 26, 2003)

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O Holy St. Anthony, gentlest of Saints, your love for God and charity for His creatures, made you worthy, when on earth, to possess miraculous powers. Miracles waited on your word, which you were ever ready to speak for those in trouble or anxiety. Encouraged by this thought, I implore of you to obtain for me (request). The answer to my prayer may require a miracle, even so, you are the Saint of Miracles. O gentle and loving St. Anthony, whose heart was ever full of human sympathy, whisper my petition into the ears of the Sweet Infant Jesus, who loved to be folded in your arms; and the gratitude of my heart will ever be yours. (Thank you very much for the graces.)

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LEON F. MARTIN JR.

of Meycauayan, Bulacan

has peacefully joined our Creator
on the 16th of May 2003 at the age of 75.

His bereaved wife **Consuelo**; children **Rene & Violy, Enrico & Thelma, Hermie & Beth, Nap & Anni, Emy, Christie & Danny, Marissa & Eddie, Marita, Paul & Irene**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at Bayugo, Meycauayan, Bulacan.

Funeral Mass will be celebrated at St. Francis of Assissi on 21 May at 2:00 p.m.

Interment will follow at Meycauayan Memorial Park at Pandayan, Meycauayan, Bulacan.

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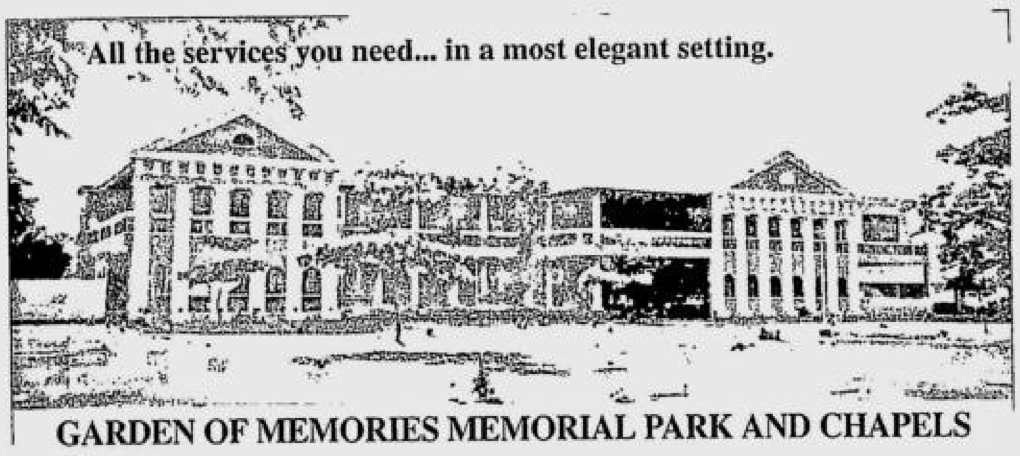

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Capt. IRENEO F. DEROTAS JR.

March 15, 1939 – May 17, 2003

Joined his Creator on May 17, 2003
after receiving the last Sacraments

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his children: **Vincent & Angelie, Irene & Voltaire**,

grandchildren: **Angelica, Miguel, Andrei & Neo**,

... and siblings: **Norma, Zenaida** and **Samson**.

He lies in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels
Sucat, Parañaque City

Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park (Parañaque)
on May 21, 2003 after the 3:00 p.m. mass
at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels.

"My soul,
be at rest
in God alone
from whom
comes my
hope."
Psalm 62:6

Dr. MANUEL V. ROMILLO, JR.

(Ret. RTC Judge)

of Aparri, Cagayan

Joined his Creator on May 17, 2003 at the age of 80.

His bereaved wife **TESSIE**; children **BUBUT & JOJO (†), TOOTS & CHAT, PANCHO, VICKY & JOHN, MARIPAZ & POPOY, BUTCH, BONG & ANGIE, ANNIE & HAMID, GINA & JAY**; brothers & sisters, grandchildren, relatives and friends mourn his passing and wish him eternal rest.

His remains lie in state at the Our Lady of Beautiful Love Parish Church, Merville Park, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on May 23, 2003 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at the Our Lady of Beautiful Love Parish Church.

EDGAR PUNO PARUNGAO

Peacefully joined his Creator on May 17, 2003
at the age of 49.

His bereaved wife **ANTONITALUZ**, partner **SYLVIA**, his loving children **SUZETTE, LADY CYL, EDGAR, JR., MARY SHAYNE** and **MARK SIMON**, and **LYNETTE**, brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for his eternal happiness in heaven.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels in Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Saturday, May 24, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Crematorium.

SANTIAGO A. CAMARA

Born July 25, 1920
Died May 17, 2003

His body lies in state at
Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe.

Interment will be on Thursday, May 22, 2003
at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina.

Message of Thanks

SR. ALMA, ALBA and *ANTONIO SAMANO*

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on the death of their sister

ANGELITA V. SAMANO

who passed away on May 12, 2003.

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Regional Office XIV
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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PROCUREMENT OF SECURITY SERVICES FOR NFA REGION XIV

The National Food Authority (NFA) invites all interested **Private Security Agencies (PSA's)** to participate in the bidding for security services in NFA Region XIV.

Interested bidders may secure the Eligibility Requirements from the Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee for Security Services (BAC-SS), after payment of non-transferable, non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (Php5,000.00) from **June 16-30, 2003.** The Application for eligibility and required documents thereof, duly accomplished in five (5) copies shall be submitted from **July 01-18, 2003.**

All Qualified Applicants shall be invited to participate in the Pre-Bidding Conference and Bidding Proper to be held on **July 31, 2003** and **September 01, 2003,** respectively, at the NFA Regional Office XIV, Conference Room, ARMM Complex, Cotabato City.

For any inquiry, please call telephone number **(064) 421-2407** and **Telefax (064) 421-2128.**

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality, technicality or defect therein and may accept the bid which is deemed most advantageous to the Government. The NFA neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the NFA guarantees that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) DIMNATANG R. UMPA
Regional Director
NFA – RO – XIV

(PDI–May 12, 19 & 26, 2003)

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The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI - May 19, 2003)

INFOTECH

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Editor **Leo Magno**

STI sues AMA over iCarnegie deal

By Erwin Oliva and Joel Pinaroc

IACADEMY, a wholly owned subsidiary of Systems Technology Institute (STI), last week sued rival computer school AMA Computer University, over a row on exclusive rights to course modules offered by iCarnegie Inc., a subsidiary of Carnegie Mellon University.

iCarnegie Inc. recently terminated its exclusive contract with iAcademy after signing a partnership with AMA.

iAcademy dean and chief operating officer Mitch Andaya filed a libel case against officers of AMA Educational Systems Holdings Inc., namely Amable Aguiluz IX, Cielo Aguiluz, Ma. Angela Aguiluz, Vicente Acsay and Alberto Buenviaje.

Andaya said the complaint was filed with the Assistant Prosecutor in Makati City.

The complaint is based on paid advertisements by AMA, which appeared on various local newspapers this month.

The advertisements stated that since AMA has been granted exclusive license by iCarnegie Inc. to offer its course modules in the Philippines, AMA was the only rightful entity that could use the trademark, tradename, and logo, and other intellectual property rights of iCarnegie in the country.

One advertisement published on May 9 even warned the public against alleged claims of iAcademy and its affiliates as exclusive licensee of iCarnegie.

iAcademy said that AMA's advertisements characterized "any act of iAcademy in connection with iCarnegie as false, misleading and deceitful."

iAcademy denied the advertisement's claims, saying that it was false and malicious, and "has caused dishonor and discredit" to the school, thereby damaging its reputation.

The complaint also stressed that the advertisements have caused anxiety and apprehension to iAcademy students, parents and enrollees.

iAcademy said that AMA's advertisements were also "malicious imputations" directed at the school.

The advertisement stated that AMA's lawyers were prepared to institute all legal actions against iAcademy and affiliates if it continues representing iCarnegie in the country.

iAcademy forged an exclusive partnership with Carnegie Technology Education (now known as iCarnegie) in 2001, allowing the school to offer Carnegie Mellon's computer science course modules in Metro Manila only, according to STI.

But early this year, STI decided to renegotiate its supposed 5-year exclusive contract with iCarnegie, Andaya said.

Andaya admitted that iAcademy had to hold off payment of balances to iCarnegie during the renegotiation.

During that time, Andaya learned that iCarnegie begun negotiations with AMA.

Unknown to iAcademy, AMA signed an exclusive licensee agreement with iCarnegie on April 21, 2003, giving the rival school all rights to offer its courses in the Philippines and Bahrain.

In a separate briefing, iCarnegie president and CEO Allan Fisher said that while the academic relationship between STI and iCarnegie went well, the business side of the agreement did not go "as planned," prompting iCarnegie to terminate the contract with iAcademy.

The STI-iCarnegie deal only called for a limited exclusive license and was concentrated on the Metro Manila area. AMA, on the other hand, offered a nationwide agreement, plus an alliance in Bahrain.

Fisher said that STI might have not "performed" as expected. iCarnegie supplied iAcademy the modules for the specialized computer courses that it has been offering for the past year.

Fisher declined to comment whether the said "business side" of the agreement pertains to low student turnout for iAcademy in courses with iCarnegie modules. Andaya admitted, however, that the low turnout of students at iAcademy prompted STI to renegotiate the contract with iCarnegie, which has turned from a non-profit organization to a profit-oriented operation only recently.

"We held payment during that time. But somewhere along the line, (iCarnegie) said that it will remove exclusivity from iAcademy because of non-payment of balances," Andaya said.

Andaya said that iCarnegie had informed them about the possible termination of exclusive license on January 2003 following an e-mail from a top executive Philip Miller.

"That was okay with us because we believe that only a few schools could offer the iCarnegie courses effectively…But iCarnegie went on and partnered with AMA and granted them exclusivity, which is strange," said Andaya.

Apparently days before AMA signed the agreement on April 21, Andaya said that iCarnegie informed iAcademy that it was still open to renegotiating the contract.

"We didn't know that they already signed a deal until we read the advertisement on May 4," clarified Andaya.

"I knew that (AMA) and iCarnegie were talking because I received a call from AMA, which was asking me to work for them. This was later in March," Andaya disclosed. "AMA said that I came highly recommended by Philip (Miller)."

On May 4, AMA came out with an advertisement on local newspapers, saying that it now had exclusive rights to offer iCarnegie courses in the Philippines.

Another advertisement was published on May 9, which now became the basis of iAcademy's complaint against AMA.

Andaya said he had called Miller to confirm

STI SUES/ B15

MATRIX
RELOADED

The Matrix spirals from movies to video games

By Leo Magno

IN "THE MATRIX RELOADED," the Wachowski brothers proved they were like Neo: Only human. Human enough to become disappointing and fail to impress after their 1999 hit "The Matrix."

I know Matrix fanboys would crucify me for that opening sentence, but I'm sorry to say that the "shock and awe" I felt in The Matrix almost four years ago was not duplicated by Larry and Andy in the sequel. So sue me.

Perhaps it was the tired premise. Perhaps it was the pretentious philosophical musings. Perhaps it was the forced religious allegory (choice = free will, The One = Christ) Perhaps it was the shallow and underutilized—albeit colorful—new characters. Perhaps The Matrix simply was a tough act to follow. Whatever the reason, The Matrix Reloaded failed to make me say "wow" like it did before, despite the gee-whiz action scenes and the first virtual cinematography and the first live-action, computer-generated fight sequence featuring virtual actors (that part where the faces and expressions of Keanu Reeves and Hugo Weaving were pasted onto the bodies of stunt doubles and computer-generated actors in the Burly Brawl fight scene where Neo fought a hundred Agent Smiths).

This, however, is not a movie review. We're here to talk about "Enter the Matrix," a game written and directed by the Wachowski brothers who are avid gamers themselves.

Despite my disappointment with the movie, The Matrix Reloaded is still a blockbuster and features the bold inclusion of a long overdue concept for digital content. A few years ago I called this concept "spiralling content," and even tried to do it with a newspaper-Internet-television spiral.

Spiralling content refers to the use of related, non-recycled information distributed to various media with the digital medium as the highlight. However, it is difficult to orchestrate the different media involved, especially when the digital proponent of the project has no mandate to tie everything in. In the case of The Matrix, full production control allowed the Wachowskis to spiral The Matrix around the movie via Reloaded, the Internet via its website, print via crossover comic books, computer animation via The Animatrix and finally, interactive entertainment via the Enter the Matrix video game.

Note that the content in the abovementioned media are all about the Matrix yet are not mere digital duplicates of the movie version. In the case of the video game, you follow the adventure of Capt. Niobe and her first mate, Ghost. In the movie, Niobe and Ghost pilot the Logos, the fastest ship in the Zion fleet. At the Zion council meeting, Niobe volunteered her crew to go topside and look for Morpheus and the Nebuchadnezzar. Eventually she and Ghost enter the Matrix to look for them, leading to that wild 14-minute car chase on the freeway.

However, in the movie Niobe's participation in the car chase (she was driving the red Firebird and saved Morpheus when he fell off the rig) was short yet crucial. Enter the Matrix the video game tells the story in-between and beyond that till they get safely back to Zion. For this, the Wachowskis had to write two scripts (one each for Niobe and Ghost, who are con-

THE MATRIX/ B15

Filipino students join other young scientists at Intel Isef

By Leo Magno

CLEVELAND, OHIO—More than 1,300 aspiring scientists from 35 countries worldwide gathered here to showcase their science projects in what could lead to new technologies coming from fresh young minds.

Finalists at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (Isef), including 10 students from the Philippines, competed for more than $3 million in scholarships and prizes at the weeklong fair. The 1,300 finalists were selected from more than a million other high school projects worldwide.

The students—whose ages range from 12 to 20 years old—competed in 14 science categories including physics, environmental science, medicine, engineering, botany, biology and computer science.

Projects in the computer science category ranged from innovative to strange, yet offer a glimpse at what could lead to new discoveries in the field of information technology that could be put into practical use.

The project of 16-year-old Roy Vincent Canseco, for example, showed that secure transmission and modification of database information could be done through short message service (SMS), popularly known as text messaging. Canseco, a product of the Philippine Science High School who is entering this school year as an electronic engineering freshman at UP Diliman, developed a system that allows secure data exchange between a server and a remote cellular phone user using SMS.

Using a development kit he borrowed from a friend, Canseco wrote a software prototype that allows text-based inquiry to access classified information reliably and securely using passwords, the user's phone number and permission checks. The user can also perform modifications to the server data.

Possible applications of the system include remote medical diagnosis and assessment by doctors using a hospital's database, inventory checks for manufacturing firms with several remote factories and warehouses, or grade inquiries by students using the school's records.

A few hours before Canseco arrived at the fair here, he was in Taiwan where he won third prize for the same project, landing him a finals slot at Isef.

Another notable IT project at the fair was that of Jerry Guo of Riverside High School of South Carolina. Guo developed a spam filter driven by artificial intelligence. On a test sample size of 1,000 e-mail messages, Guo's software developed on Visual Basic was able to filter spam, or unsolicited e-mail, with a 97.3-percent accuracy rate.

Another student, Balint Erdelyi of Premontratensian High School in Hungary, developed a graphical user interface-driven firewall that shields networks from hackers. Erdelyi says his Agnos System is user-friendly unlike typical firewalls that have to be installed by network administrators.

Yet another was a program that correlates mouse pointer movement to the human eye by Darash Desai of Florida. Desai, originally from India, seeks to move natural human-to-computer interface even further beyond speech recognition. His software calculates where the user is looking in relation to the computer display, making the mouse pointer move where the users' eyes go. Trials returned a success rate of between 96.25 and 100 percent.

Other interesting IT-related projects at the Isef were Missouri-based Jake Hertenstein's "unbreakable" encryption system using fractals, an alternative operating system called JOST OS from John Thielemann of Pasadena, a software-based obesity monitoring and guidance method from Seung Kyun Ryu of South Korea and a computer language for children by Brittney Black of North Dakota.

In the end, however, winners had to emerge from the roster of interesting Isef projects. The top prizes, called the Intel Foundation Young Scientist Scholarships, were awarded to Elena Glassman of Pennsylvania; Lisa Glukhovsky of Connecticut; and Anila Madiraju of Quebec. Each received a $50,000 scholarship and a computer.

The Filipinos were not empty-handed, though. The microbiology project of Efrellene Galula of the Agusan del Sur National High School won second place in the American Intellectual Property Law Association special prize. Galula studied the use of fluids from the midgut of leeches as an antibacterial agent.

The Isef is the world's largest pre-college science competition and has been staged for the last 54 years. It is coordinated by Science Service, a non-profit organization, and has been sponsored by Intel Corp. for the last six years.

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Matrix spirals from movies to video games

From page B14

trolled separately in the game) and directed the camera angles for the entire game.

To do this, actress Jada Pinkett-Smith (Niobe) and Anthony Wong (Ghost) had to do hours of extra filming for exclusive cut scenes in the video game, plus hours of motion capture and voice acting. In other words, Enter the Matrix the video game runs parallel with The Matrix Reloaded, but it is a totally different medium and story that spirals with the movie.

That's exactly what the Wachowskis want us technofreaks to do: Watch the movie, buy the video game, watch The Animatrix and read the comic book. Aside from us absorbing the entire Matrix mytho, the brothers get rich in the process.

And that's exactly what I did on May 15. I saw the movie; picked up a copy of the game and got the Animatrix in the process. I had to preorder the game at Tower City in Cleveland to be assured of a copy and get the bonus DVD (which includes The Animatrix and a short film feature on the making of the game). Plus, you get a huge discount on the strategy guide when you preorder. Total cost: $59, a savings of $26. Just the game itself will be sold in the Philippines for as much as P3,400 (more than $60) in a few weeks, unless you're a filthy pirate (in which case you'd buy a copy for P200 for the Xbox and down to P100 for the PS2). Any self-respecting Matrix fan (and any self-respecting gamer) would buy an original, buddy.

Enter the Matrix was developed by Shiny Entertainment and produced by Atari. Atari makes a comeback with this game, after a name change when it was bought by French gamemaker Infogrames a few years ago. Infogrames realized it would be better off with the name Atari, hence the change starting with Enter the Matrix.

And how's Enter the Matrix, the video game? I've just started it in Cleveland, and the game begins with Niobe jacking into the Matrix to get a message from Thadeus of the Osiris. Again, this spirals into the first of nine Animatrix specials, The Last Flight of the Osiris. I'm having fun with the "Focus" move, where you get to kick off walls, jump on rooftops and do all that bullet time moves you see in the movie.

However, I cheated by leafing through the strategy guide just enough so I'd have material for this story. The guide said eventually you'd lock horns with the Rayment twins, Agent Smith and the other agents, and do some friendly sparring with Trinity and Seraph (the kick-ass Chinese who escorted Neo to the Oracle). A promising feature of the game is the simulated hack into the Matrix, where—using your controller to operate a DOS-like interface—you get to "reprogram" the Matrix to exploit glitches like opening new exit doors, unlock secrets, minigames and multiplayer mode.

Don't worry, we'll review this game later once I finish it. Till then, try to figure out what went wrong with the movie sequel.

STI sues AMA. . .

From page B14

the advertisements after they were published. But the executive informed him that the deal with AMA was not yet consummated.

Andaya later asked the executive if iAcademy could continue offering iCarnegie courses in Metro Manila for its existing and incoming students if the deal pushes through with AMA.

On May 6, Andaya claimed to have been told by Miller that AMA refused to let iAcademy continue offering iCarnegie courses, unless he could convince AMA.

Miller, however, denied telling Andaya to talk to AMA.

Andaya declined to comment on whether it would pursue a case against iCarnegie but indicated that a legal action is possible against the US-based company.

He, however, said that with the signing of the deal on April 21 between AMA and iCarnegie, its contract with the US-based subsidiary of Carnegie Mellon University is effectively terminated.

iCarnegie's Fisher stated during a briefing: "The partnerships between STI and iCarnegie was terminated under the terms of the contract."

As evidence, AMA officials presented a letter during the briefing signed by a high-ranking executive of iCarnegie, which showed the delivery of a written notice to STI.

Andaya denied to have received any formal notice from either iCarnegie or AMA.

"(iCarnegie) should have allowed us to continue. Education is not just a product you can just pull out," said Andaya. "They should not leave the students hanging. It is their moral obligation as educators."

Andaya, however, stressed that the recent termination of its contract with iCarnegie would not affect operations of iAcademy.

He assured that the iCarnegie courses offered by the school is just part of a suite of other course modules available in the school.

Meanwhile, AMA officials said there is a possibility that STI students taking up iCarnegie education modules will continue their studies with AMA, which is planning to roll out its iCarnegie-infused computer courses this September.

"We are studying this possibility," said Bernie Ivans Salay, vice president for business development at AMA.

STI and AMA are considered the two largest computer schools in the Philippines and bitter rivals in this arena.

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Next Mobile, Capwire OK deal

THE PROPOSAL of trunk radio operator Next Mobile Phil. Inc. to acquire a 70-percent stake in Capitol Wireless Inc. has already been deemed "acceptable" by company shareholders, although issues with creditor-banks will still have to be resolved to complete a sale.

Jose Luis Santiago, chair of both Capwire and its parent firm Republic Telecommunications Holdings Inc., said in an interview that an "agreement in principle" had already been forged between Next Mobile and Capwire.

"The amount offered is acceptable to the stockholders," he said.

He declined to reveal how much the offer was, citing a nondisclosure agreement with Next Mobile.

Next Mobile had proposed to buy Retelcom's 70-percent stake in Capwire. Although the offer was already "acceptable" to company shareholders, Next Mobile still has to negotiate with Capwire's creditor-banks in view of the restructuring of the company's debts worth P1 billion.

Santiago said possible agreements that Next Mobile could strike with Capwire's creditors included a buyout of debts at a discount or the continued restructuring of these debts but under Next Mobile management. *Abigail Ho*

Transco set to bid out $109M worth of contracts

By Ronnel W. Domingo

NATIONAL Transmission Corp. is bidding out contracts for major transmission projects worth $109 million in June and September, company president Alan T. Ortiz said.

In a telephone interview, Ortiz said the auction for the $68.5-million Leyte-Cebu interconnection project would be held in June through electronic bidding.

He said four firms were expected to bid for the contract and that the winner would be announced sometime in July or August.

The pre-qualified bidders, according to Transco records, are Nissho Iwai Corp. and Kanematsu Corp. of Japan, ABB of Sweden and Elcom International Inc. of Italy.

The Leyte-Cebu project, with a budget cap of $68.5 million, would need a 34-kilometer undersea cable, which would bring 200 megawatts of electricity from Tongonan in Leyte to Cebu.

Transco aims to complete the project by the end of 2004.

Also, Ortiz said Transco had slated for bidding in September the contract for the $40-million Cebu-Mactan interconnection project.

"There are 17 firms that have shown interest but we have yet to know how many will prequalify or make it to the bidding," Ortiz said.

The official said a pre-feasibility study was being conducted on the possible upgrading of the existing Leyte-Panay interconnection.

"We are studying the possibility of doubling the capacity of the Leyte-Panay grid from 100 MW to 200 MW," Ortiz said.

He said an upgrading was needed to enable the grid to accommodate new power generation projects in the area, which are expected to provide an additional 40 MW to 60 MW in the area.

The Transco president said that if the uprating project was feasible, Transco aimed to have the contract auctioned off within the term of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The Visayas projects are expected to mitigate the looming power supply shortage in the region.

Data from the Department of Energy showed that 1,000 megawatts of additional generating capacity would be needed in the Visayas in the next few years.

The DOE said that if projects deemed necessary were not done immediately, there would be a "serious" power shortage in the Visayas by 2004 or 2005.

Gov't sees May inflation rate at 2.6-2.8%

By Clarissa S. Batino and Michelle V. Remo

THE INFLATION rate is expected to remain low at 2.6 to 2.8 percent in May given a number of positive developments that help stabilize consumer prices, a senior economist said.

Ma. Socorro Zingapan, director for policy and planning of the National Economic and Development Authority, said in an interview that the inflation rate for the whole year would likely be significantly lower than the forecast of 4.5 to 5.5 percent with the continued strengthening of the peso against the dollar and the decline in world crude prices.

These developments have prompted the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to consider bringing back to a range of 4-5 percent, from 4.5-5.5 percent, the inflation target for the year.

A BSP official said there was a need to make the government's inflation-targeting program more credible after the central bank missed last year's target of 4.5-5.5 percent. Last year's inflation rate stood at only 3.1 percent.

An adjustment in the inflation target, however, would lead to revisions in other macro economic goals of the government.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said he preferred that all targets, starting from inflation, be reviewed saying that "a movement in one item would lead to similar adjustments in other numbers."

In the meantime, Zingapan said bigger household expenditures in view of the start of the school year in June might put pressure on prices. She was, however, quick to add that this would likely be offset by a strong peso and low oil prices.

Oil firms earlier this month reduced gasoline prices by 30 centavos per liter, and diesel and kerosene by 20 centavos per liter. Last month, the average Dubai crude prices stood at $23.5 per barrel, lower than the previous month's average of $27.38, the Neda said.

Economic Planning Secretary Romulo Neri said the inflation rate would likely taper off further starting this month from 2.8 percent in April. Neri said the impact of the oil price reductions in recent months would likely start kicking-in by May.

Zingapan also said the growth in corn production of 21.93 percent in the first quarter was expected to have a positive effect on the inflation rate for May.

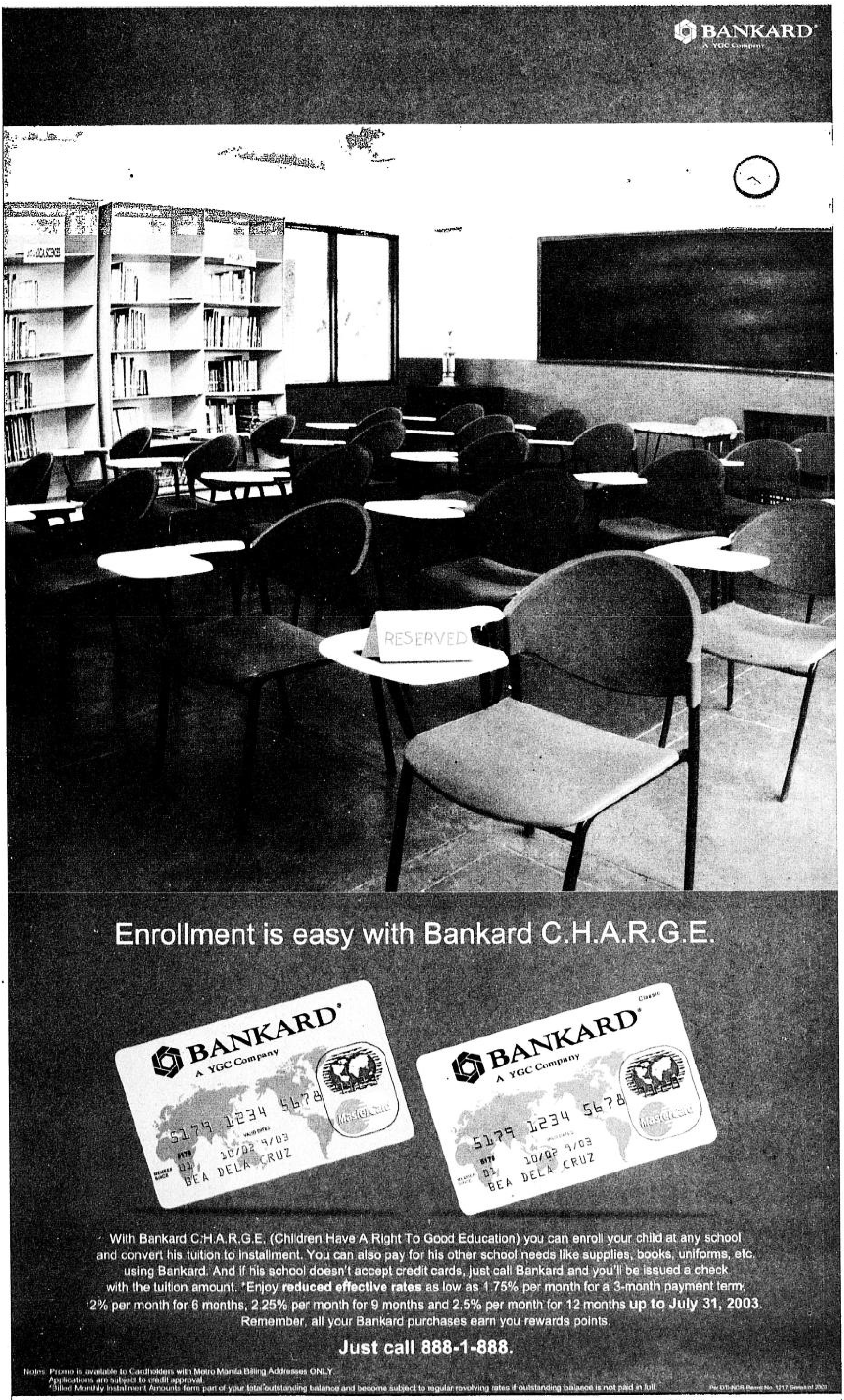
"The growth should improve inventory level and therefore ease the pressure on prices during the month," she said.

A BSP official said any risks to inflation that would occur in the second half of the year would no longer impact on the 2003 target but would be felt in 2004.

"Even the danger from SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) appeared to have diminished. The only thing we are watching now is a possible wage hike but even that, if it pushes through, would happen later this year and would no longer affect this year's numbers," he said.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said that if the central bank really wanted a review, it should present its case before the Development Budget Coordination Committee.

The central bank adopted inflation-targeting as its monetary policy framework last year. This means the BSP will use its monetary tools only to keep consumer prices stable and not to prop up the local currency as it had been doing in the past.



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Top three issues businesses face today

By Margie Quimpo-Espino and Tina Arceo-Dumlao

EXECUTIVE SPEAK

CONCEPCION: Weak spending.

DR. VICKI BELO: Slow down at the clinic.

GUERRERO: Finding the right people.

GOKONGWEI: Growing receivables.

ARCHES: Deflation. Lack of growth.

OVER the past 20 years, Philippine businesses had to contend with political and economic problems.

Problems of decades past remains today.

Business Monday recently asked executives and entrepreneurs what ails their businesses today.

Jose A. Concepcion III, president/CEO, RFM Corp.

We are still faced with weak consumer spending and this has to do with the economic condition of our country.

But the low level of confidence that existed in the past is gradually improving with the appreciation of the peso and the relative stable rates.

If this continues and we have a very stable exchange rate then business and consumer confidence will improve. We still have to see banks go back to their aggressive lending. Their NPL (nonperforming loans) problems have not been addressed. They have not liquidated these NPLs. Once this happens, we hope to see banks lend more aggressively.

We are seeing an increase in our exports and we seem to be more competitive at these exchange rates.

In relation, if our exports continue to outpace our imports we will see continued trade surplus for the Philippines which will contribute to a stable foreign exchange. Likewise, a current account surplus because of strong exports and OFW remittances will even be better.

I continue to have an optimistic view but with a lot of caution still in business investments till we see the political situation next year.

What we will need is continuity of the Arroyo policies. We cannot afford a change since most of her policies are toward economic recovery.

Once confidence is back, investments and spending will come back spurring demand and this will create more demand for energy which will solve even the PPA problem which will benefit consumers.

Patricia Arches, president/CEO McCann Erickson Phils. Inc.

1. Deflation. Low prices and interest rates yet lack of demand/growth.

2. Profit squeeze due to competition for shrinking markets. Lack of consumer demand is causing no business expansion hence little business opportunities and competitive price undercutting to get remaining business.

3. Lawlessness and government incompetence to manage the situation.

Dr. Vicki Belo of Belo Medical Group

1. Slow down at the clinic because half of my sales are from *balikbayans* and they are not coming.

2. Increase in costs because most of my stuff comes from the States but we can't increase charges because people are having a hard time.

3. Difficulty getting good nursing staff since they are all leaving

Ito Ramirez, PLDT SVP for the GMM Retail Busienss group

1. Declining revenues.

2. Technology revolution resulting to wireless substitution of landline.

3. Manpower reduction program.

David Guerrero, DDBO/Ortega/Guerrero ad agency

As a passionately creative advertising agency, we have somewhat different issues to the mainstrea of business:

Finding enough people who are motivated by excellence.

2. Making sure we don't take ourselves too seriously

3. Getting people to go home and have a life with their friends and families in the real world.

Pacita Juan of the Figaro Coffee chain

1. Quality of our graduates.

2. Work ethics of our youth.

3. Government support for our industry.

Tina Maristela-Ocampo, entrepreneur, owner of The Black Shop, Mis, Fish, Anonymous

1. Global economic crisis in which third world countries get hit the most. We deal with foreign currency so fluctuation affects our costs.

2. The SARS in Hong Kong where most of our goods are from. Ordering to shipping takes 60 days, the worst is 90 days now compared to 45 days before the SARS hit. To top it all I have not been to Hong Kong for the longest time. Orders are done via Fed-Ex and the Internet.

Crickette Tantoco, VP for Operations, Shopwise

1. Lackluster Economy. Nothing is happening, demand is flat, people keep cutting back and looking for cheaper substitutes.

2. SARS is an issue especially for us as we do a lot of buying in Asian countries. It has affected our ability to source products.

3. Security. We hear al-Qaida attacks, this creates anxiety and uncertainty. Any attack affects our business.

Lisa Gokongwei, Summit Publishing Corp.

Growing receivables, shrinking peso value, crime.

Edd Fuentes, head of Fuentes Publicity Network Inc.

1. Uncertainty of the business situation which affects your planning and that of your clients'.

2. Collection problem. Some business are affected and take a while to pay so your cash flow is affected.

3. Conservative prospects for growth.

At this point you accept that there is not growth this year. Everybody is in a mode of just being able to survive.

TOP THREE/ B2-2

Crucial bill being resisted in Congress

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

A VEHICLE for vital change has stalled in Congress. It hopes to address what is likely the biggest threat to the economy: the ballooning deficit caused by falling tax revenues. But opponents have been watering it down in the legislature.

The bill concerns the abolition of the Bureau of Internal Revenue. It is to be replaced by a new authority with corporate powers. The first version was the Internal Revenue Management Authority or IRMA. Protests by BIR employees led to the filing of a different bill called NARA: the National Authority for Revenue Administration.

Emmanuel de Dios of the UP School of Economics explains the logic for the reform bills in his paper, "NARA: Hardwood gone soft?"

Changing incentives

The professor cites terms from the economics of incentives. The level of income needed to keep a public employee in line is called the efficiency wage.

The efficiency wage to ensure that he is honest will be higher when (1) there is greater potential gain from corruption, or (2) the risk of detection is low, or (3) the prospect for long-term employment is low.

"Such a system (of ordinary wage rates) has not worked well for the Philippines and particularly for an agency such as the BIR," says de Dios.

One reason is that the gains from graft tend to be very large. Another is that the chances of being detected are low.

High salaries to keep honest

This in turn is due to the wide discretion given to executives, and because of "the unreliability of conviction under the justice system." Putting it together, the efficiency wage needed to keep BIR employees honest will end up very high.

Contrast this with reality on the ground. The national budget is in deficit, so government salaries are dismal. The actual pay of BIR officials and employees is much, much lower than the efficiency wage.

NARA tries to close the gap by offering incentive contracts - salaries will depend on performance. High tax collection will result in high pay for the officials and agents. This is similar to performance bonuses and stock options given in the private sector.

The ordinary bureaucratic salary can be compared to a light switch, notes de Dios. One simply turns the switch on or off. In contrast, an incentive contract is like a light switch with a dimmer: you can vary the intensity of the light as you see fit.

Performance contracts

Under the NARA bill, the CEO of the new authority signs a performance contract with the Revenue Board. For example, collections above X amount will result in pay hikes, while collections below a level Y will lead to pay cuts. A lousy underperforming CEO will end up being fired, just as private executives are.

The set-up recognizes that revenue collectors do in fact employ much discretion in their work. It easily measures passing and failing performance. And it avoids court battles that drag on and on. That way, the government can take out revenue district officers who are not necessarily corrupt, but who do not fulfill their collection targets.

These changes should keep tax agents honest and should address the grave collection problem.

What about the corrupt?

There are two thorny issues that trouble NARA though.

One is corrupt personnel. The original IRMA bill intended to weed out the corrupt from an agency perceived as among the most corrupt state bodies.

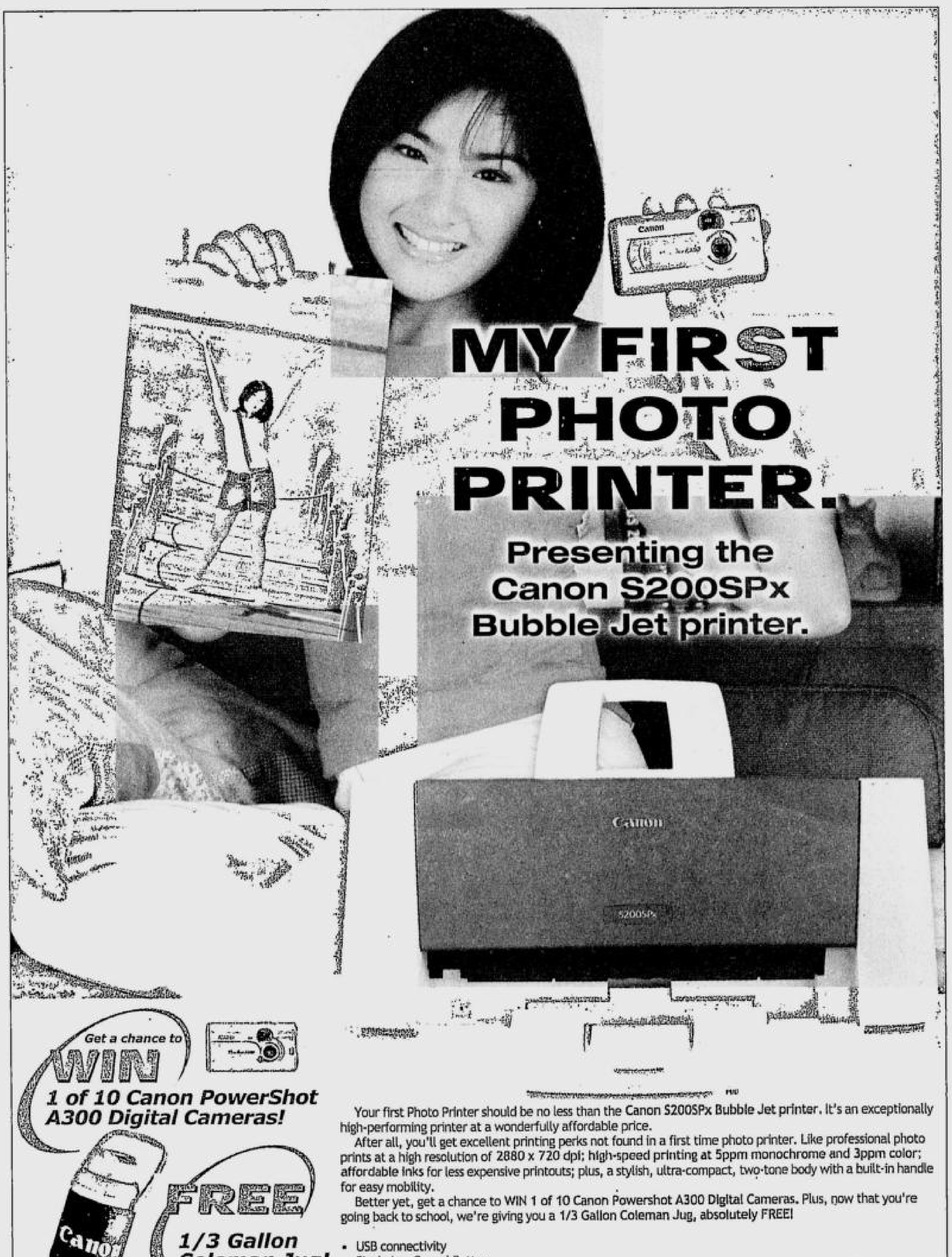
It refused to give priority hiring to the present BIR staff, and the clause ignited an outcry in the bureau.

So legislators watered it down to the NARA bill which reversed the clause.

That is, says the bill, BIR personnel shall enjoy preferential absorption.

"While one can readily go along with the proposition that 'not everyone in government is

CRUCIAL/ B2-2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MOVEMENTS

AUB announces new promotions

THE ASIA United Bank (AUB) recently announced the new promotions.

Herminia C. Musico and Rodelio A. Cayetano to the rank of first vice president of general accounting group and information technology group, respectively.

CAYETANO

Luis Gregorio M. Maloles has been named to the post of vice president, Institutional Banking Group.

Before joining AUB, Musico, a certified public accountant was with Stores Specialist Inc. as its finance manager and SGV & Co. as its senior auditor in-charge. She joined Asia United Bank in 1997 as assistant vice president and later was promoted to vice president, general accounting group head. She graduated form the University of the Philippines with a degree in Bachelor of Science in Business Administration major in Accounting.

MUSICO

Cayetano, a licensed electrical engineer joined Asia United Bank as a consultant for the Bank's information technology group and was subsequently made vice president of the same group. Prior to AUB, he was with Citytrust Banking Corp. and Bank of the Philippines Islands as vice president. He graduated form the University of Sto. Tomas with a degree in Bachelor of Science major in Electrical Engineering.

MALOLES

A graduate of the University of the Philippine, Manila with a degree in Bachelor of Arts in Development Studies, Maloles joined AUB in October 2000 as Assistant vice president for Institutional Banking Group. He worked briefly with Banco Santander Philippines, Inc. as manager from 1999-2000.

Top three issues . . .

From page B2-1

Miguel Ramos, president, Aspac Advertising

1. Prolonged period of weak economic demand.

2.Competitiveness against regional counterparts.

3. Tapping into new growth avenues.

Hans Kenneth Tan, president, Beyond Innovations Inc.

The problems are politics, unemployment and labor strikes. We are not improving because of corruption. The economy is getting worse.

Wilson Chan, president, Leyte Park Hotel

The top three problems are SARS, the Muslim conflict and the presidential election next year.

Filemon Berba Jr., retired Ayala exec, consultant of IMI an electronics firm

Peace and order and SARS

Bobby Caballero, Caballero Worldwide Partners.

1. Fragmentation (by some clients) of traditional services to outsource suppliers with shallow expertise and experience levels.

2. Multi-tasking of duties to reduce overheads results in costly errors.

3. The attraction of even government corporation to use multinational firms instead of all Filipino agencies (the little number that are still surviving).

Vida Doria, owner, Vida Doria boutique chain

The top three issues affecting the business are the escalating rent of store spaces, the SARS scare and the terrorist activities that scare people away from the malls

Hiring mistake? Pay everyday you delay!

JUST about everyone has made a hiring mistake. If that's not bad enough, many procrastinate and don't do anything about replacing the wrong person quickly enough. There are many reasons why this happens, but let's focus on three major ones.

One main reason is denial. Those bosses who are burnt-out, barely coping with their over-worked colleagues and have to put out fires on an almost daily basis, find themselves refusing to admit a hiring mistake was committed.

In most instances, they simply dread the thought of going through another cycle of the hiring process: recruitment, interview, approval, negotiation and training before the new person becomes productive. They are just too aware of the time and trouble involved to get a replacement—plus the prospect of having to show the wrong person out the door is not appealing to many.

The second main reason is the failure to realize that the limited contribution of the wrong person is far offset by the costs to keep the wrong person. This is explained in greater detail later on in this article.

The third main reason is ego. We don't want to admit that we made a mistake. We make excuses like, "not having given the person enough time, sufficient training and resources." Another typical excuse is "the right people are really hard to find and there are not that many suitable candidates available anyway."

Yes, it is possible that there was a mismatch between the skills set of the new hire and the requirements of the position. So, the feasibility of the wrong person as the right person in another position within the firm, should by all means, be explored. However, cases such as these maybe are rare and may not be an available option in many companies. Nevertheless, there is no denying it was still a hiring mistake for the original position for which the person was hired.

The truth is, the issue is almost always related to more, the attitude and aptitude; and is seldom about skills.

MAPping THE FUTURE

Franco del Rosario

The right person will not make the lack of a few skills a hindrance. They just go and work harder and somehow manage to acquire the skills necessary to succeed. The right person is quick to anticipate the necessary skills in any assignment and teams up with the people that fill the skills gap.

The point is your interests would best be served by doing something about it right away. Why?

Take your pick on any of the following:

1. You are not the only one that knows you have a wrong person.

2. Every day you keep that wrong person, others are asking themselves why you are not doing anything about it. This may hurt your reputation as well as it may result in rumors being spread about you.

3. Others may be carrying some of the load of the wrong person and this will surely take a toll on them over a prolonged period.

4. Keeping a wrong person sends the wrong message that poor performers are tolerated. Your credibility is seriously put to question when you are trying to rally your troops on excellence while they see that there are deadweights in your organization.

5. In an organization, there are probably the right people, wrong people and the borderline people. Invariably, there is a clash of these cultures. You run the risk of the borderline people being infected by the wrong people and get pulled down along with them.

6. It is not unlikely that keeping the wrong people may be a contributing factor to losing some of the right people in the firm.

7. The limited contribution of the wrong person is far offset by the costs to keep the wrong person.

To give you an appreciation of how much it is costing you to keep the wrong person, go through the checklist below for each person that report to you. Try to quantify in terms of the additional man hours you as a boss could save and instead use in more productive ways if you did not have to spend time with this wrong person on things like:

1. consistently having to give a lengthy explanation of an assignment

2. sorting out problems constantly to make up for a lack of sense of anticipation

3. giving additional direction constantly to make up for a lack of initiative

4. doing more status reviews to make up for a lack of a sense of urgency

5. reviewing work that is less than "complete staff work" (the work product does not consider all the critical angles and lacks sufficient considerations of the risks and exposures)

6. doing some of the work yourself by way of phone calls, meetings, analysis

7. coming up with all kinds of schemes just to light a fire under this person

8. going over previously covered material and problems

9. tracking down the person all the time; especially if the person is a habitual late comer in the morning and after lunch

In conclusion, redeem the time! The sooner you deal with it, the better it is for everyone. Yes, it is unpleasant and may involve a lot of work. But, that's why people look to you for direction. You do yourself and your company a disservice by NOT moving on and putting this behind you as quickly as possible. However, "quickly" does not mean ignoring the correct process, otherwise you may find yourself compounding your problem with a legal one. *(The author is the chair of the Sharexchange Brokers Inc. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)*

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Henson family writes surprise end to Muppet caper

LOS ANGELES—For Kermit the Frog, being green may be getting a little easier these days.

Perched atop the arched entrance to Jim Henson Co.'s studio in Hollywood, the famous green Muppet can stare at the Crazy Girls Exotic Strip Show across the street—as he has for years.

But if he turns around, the unusual sight behind him may be even prettier for the frog king and sidekicks like Miss Piggy and Fozzie Bear—for there stands Brian Henson, son of the Muppet's creator Jim Henson, Kermit's new boss.

Brian and his siblings have regained Henson family ownership of the Muppets and their famous studio just off Sunset Boulevard and are planning to breathe new life into what had become a stale, slimmed down franchise under its previous owners, the German media firm EM.TV & Merchandising.

The five Hensons, Brian, Lisa, Cheryl, Heather and John, bought the business back—minus several major assets like the Sesame Street characters and three cable networks—for $78 million on May 8, after having sold it three years earlier for $680 million.

The Henson family sealed the deal, grabbing the company from a handful of bidders who had been haggling for years, nearly 13 years to the day since the death of their father.

"I think he'd be amused by the whole thing," Brian Henson told Reuters, standing in the Muppet lot, which was built by Charlie Chaplin who filmed some of his most famous pictures there. The lot also houses a recording studio that draws some weirdly dressed humans to the scene, like the group KISS.

Evergreen and weird

Hollywood has marveled at the storybook ending of the battle for control of the Muppets, but the Hensons are not banking on nostalgia to fuel new Muppet projects.

"We rely on our characters to be interesting and strange and weird," Lisa Henson, movie production chief of Henson Co., said in an interview.

Kermit and the Muppets are widely seen as a bit worn from years of corporate neglect, but Lisa Henson argued they were "evergreen" because they were more than cute.

Jim Henson created the dancing, singing, wisecracking Muppets and Kermit, Miss Piggy and Fozzie Bear stormed prime time TV with their variety show in the 1970s, then took to the silver screen with a series of movies.

Kermit sang about the difficulty of being green, visited Sesame Street, the home of Muppet cousins such as Big Bird. Children throughout the United States imitated the loopy accent of the Swedish Chef and the array of squeaks and growls Henson and his cohorts dreamed up for other characters.

However, after Henson's 1990 death upset an offer from Walt Disney Co. to buy the business, the company struggled with the question of how big to grow.

The Henson children sold the company to Germany's EM.TV & Merchandising for $680 million because the media conglomerate appeared to have the resources to compete with huge rivals. But EM.TV's financial health began deteriorating right after the deal and it started selling Henson assets, including Big Bird and the other Sesame Street characters.

Plans for a new Muppet television show fizzled in the last year, while a made-for-TV holiday movie last year was a hit as sales talks waxed and waned.

Disney chief executive Michael Eisner said earlier this year that he expected to announce a Muppet deal.

A Disney spokesperson declined to comment on the talks, although Brian Henson said his family "loves" Disney and that it was "certainly not out of the question" that

HENSON/ B2-3

Crucial bill being resisted in Congress

From page B2-1

corrupt,' this is far from saying that 'no one in government is corrupt—particularly in the BIR'" says De Dios.

The head of NARA would much prefer the freedom to choose trusted executives. But he or she may end up with recycled officials and agents, whose hands are not certifiably clean. The revenue collection targets will have to be lowered. (At least the bill proposes lifestyle checks on former BIR employees.)

Another tough issue is separation pay. The IRMA bill offered a severance package following the present civil service laws. That means one month's pay for every year of service.

The NARA bill is much more generous. In Congress there is talk of offering three to even five months of pay per year of service.

"Narra, the hardwood, is spelled with two R's. The present bill is spelled with only one R. I fear that the R dropped stood for 'resoluteness,'" says de Dios.

And yet, after all the compromises, the NARA bill is still being resisted by legislators. *(Comments to <darroyo@philonline.com>)*

Henson family writes surprise end to Muppet caper

From page B2-2

Disney, which already features Muppets at theme park attractions, would take a strategic role in Henson's future.

One source familiar with the process said that bidder Classic Media had nearly sealed a deal, but before it was to close, there was one last chance for bids and that's when the Henson family decided to regain their heritage.

Brian Henson said the family had knocked together an offer in six days. "Only in the last two weeks did we feel like enough is enough, and we know how to run this company," he said.

Throughout the Henson empire, there was a huge sense of relief. David Barrington Holt, creative supervisor of the Los Angeles arm of the special effects Creature Shop, which makes aliens and animals such as the critters for the "Doctor Doolittle" movie and the Muppets, said he was waiting for directions.

"It's great that the company is back home, but now we need to know what the plan is," he said.

Reuters

Can you tell who the farmer is in this picture?

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(From L to R) Mr. Rey Vivo-entrepreneur, Mrs. Tita Sieterenles-businesswoman, Mr. Dennis Topacio-bank executive, Mr. Mars Lavaro-retired university professor, Mr. Tony Dimalanta-architect, Mrs. Thiele Topacio-finance officer.

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First there was IQ, then EQ, now leaders need SQ

By Karen V. de Asis
Contributor

THERE are almost as many different forms of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept. The first was the authoritarian model of leadership where a single leader demanded compliance and followers obeyed without questioning.

Next was transactional leadership that was marked by self-interest and making deals often political, economic or psychological in nature. The relationship is flitting with no enduring purpose. It often breaks down when the terms of agreement or promises are not kept. Fear and mistrust permeate in an organization governed by an authoritarian and transactional leadership.

● In contrast, a transformational type of leadership engages the follower, where both leader and follower pursue one purpose, one mission and one vision.

Quality of a spiritual leader

Today, leadership has gained a new dimension with spirituality. A number of authors and researchers maintain that the difference of spiritual leadership from previous types of leadership is its being heart-driven. Writer Janet O. Hagberg cites the following qualities characteristic of a spiritual leader: self-reflective, leads from the heart, recognizes one's gifts, full of trust, knows one's self, has a mission enabling others, connects with others and with God or a higher power, is at peace with himself and has integrity.

Another author and researcher, Gilbert Fairholm, suggests three foundation stones for spiritual leadership: morality, stewardship and community.

Spiritual leadership was likewise recognized in the writings of business researcher and writer Jim Collins.

In his qualitative research of 11 companies, Collins reveals that truly great companies are visionary and values driven. Their leaders exhibit what Collins calls Level 5 leadership whose qualities demonstrate all the characteristics present in a leader with high spiritual intelligence including strong faith and profound personal humility.

Spiritual intelligence has found concrete form in the works of Dana Zohar's SQ (spiritual intelligence) and Dr. Richard Wolman's psychomatrix spiritual inventory (PSI) which is a groundbreaking system for determining the individual's level of spiritual intelligence without reference to a specific religious ideology.

Zohar, a quantum physicist, establishes that there is a God-spot activity in the brain that provides each human being with a spiritual intelligence. God-spot is an area behind the temples in the temporal lobe area of the brain that triggers fundamental questions like, "Why am I here? Why am I in this relationship?, Why am I wasting my time in this planet? etc." A magnetic meter near the temples that registers a much stronger magnetic field during spiritual thinking measures the God-spot activity.

Spiritual intelligence

Zohar maintains that indications of spiritual intelligence include: one, self-awareness, you know who you really are and recognize that you are connected with the whole universe; two, a values-led vision indicative of a need to naturally want to serve which is characteristic of humanity; three, the capacity to face and use adversity which means owning one's mistakes and using pain and tragedy to learn; four, holistic which refers to how an individual sees the connection between things including being open to and interested in everything; five, diversity which means to see what is different in one's person and say 'thank God for that!'; six, independence; seven, the tendency to ask why; eight, the ability to put things in a bigger perspective or larger context of meaning and finally, spontaneity that refers to one's responsiveness to the world.

Wolman (2001) identifies seven factors that make up human spiritual experience and behavior. They are divinity, mindfulness, intellectuality, community, extrasensory perception, childhood spirituality and trauma.

Wolman states that being able to understand one's spiritual make-up strengths and limitations are essential to being able to see and improve personal relationships and relationship to the world.

Wolman's PSI has been applied to tens of thousands of individuals in leadership and administrative positions worldwide. The instrument was recently pilot-tested among a number of secondary school administrators of Region 4 through an exploratory study conducted by Dr. Roberto T. Borromeo, chair of the Education Department of the De La Salle University. The 80-item inventory is a listing of psycho-spiritual statements that describe the spiritual experience of individuals regardless of age, gender, ethnic, cultural or religious background.

The study indicated the following results among the respondent administrators:

Community. The highest obtained score by the respondents is on community. According to Wolman, a high score on community indicates involvement with a wide variety of social activities that relate to charity like working with the less fortunate and socially disadvantaged. Likewise, high scorers often attend religious services, consult with clergy or spiritual leaders, and participate in classes, workshops and conferences concerning spirituality or may be members of a spiritual community.

Divinity. The respondents' second highest score is on divinity. Wolman describes respondents who score high on divinity as individuals who demonstrate a strong awareness of and connection to a Higher Being or Divine Presence often when experiencing the beauty and power of nature and the arts.

Childhood spirituality. The third highest score was obtained on childhood spirituality. A high score in this factor indicates frequent and meaningful spiritual activities early in life.

Extrasensory perception. The factor, extrasensory perception, ranked fourth among the local educational administrators. Wolman describes those who score high in this factor are individuals who demonstrate psychic awareness that encompasses knowledge outside conventional ways of knowing.

Trauma. A high score in this factor indicates that many among the respondent administrators have experienced physical or emotional pain and suffering.

Mindfulness and intellectuality. The lowest scores were on mindfulness and intellectuality. A low score on mindfulness means that the respondent administrators had little concern about their own physical well-being. On the other hand, a low rating on intellectuality indicates greater involvement with rituals and less of real, deep, spiritual reflection.

Overall, Borromeo's study confirms that local educational administrators exhibit a number of characteristics that make up the spiritual leader. These are the qualities of community, connection with others and with God or a higher power and values. A gap exists however, in the area of self-renewal and the practice of a deeper, more meaningful self-reflection likewise, a most significant quality of a spiritual leader.

(The author is a professor of Marketing Management and Brand Management at the De La Salle Professional School's Graduate School of Business with email address at kdeasis@skyinet.net.)

Hit your business homerun with a good pitch

THERE are a lot of good business ideas floating around. But only a few ever get heard, particularly by people who will eventually bet their money on a good business idea and plan.

One of the most common mistakes of most entrepreneurs is that they don't even come close to the door whenever they make a business pitch to potential investors.

Usually, they fumble when investors ask what business they are in. They get tongue-tied, searching for the right pitch.

Mentor capitalist Joey Gurango says that if an entrepreneur fails to communicate what his business is all about in five minutes, then he or she will not come close to the door.

Good pitch

So what makes a good pitch?

First, making a pitch is not limited to entrepreneurs trying to attract investors, Gurango says. It can also work for employers searching for talents, for businesses evaluating suppliers, or for telemarketers trying to sell a service or product to customers.

So a pitch will vary depending on who you are talking to. For this matter, let's focus on a company starting up and is bent on finding an angel investor.

Before you start talking about the nature of your business, Gurango says start with this question in mind: What do I need from you that relates to my business?

If you will be talking to a potential investor, this question can be rephrased this way: Why do you have to invest in my business? If you will be talking to a potential employee: Why would you want to work for my company?

Next, we now come to the pitch. Gurango says that you should first state the problem or opportunity you and your business wants to address. You must be very specific about this point.

Let's say you want to put up a restaurant in Eastwood City, Libis. You have identified an opportunity in serving the needs of those working during night shifts in the area.

Gurango says you have to state how big this opportunity is. From our example, you can now state the number of people working night shift at Eastwood. In business lingo, this is equal to stating the market size.

After you've stated the size of the opportunity, Gurango says you then explain how you intend to address this specific market. This is akin to describing how you intend to "attract and capture" your audience.

So for a restaurant aiming to target night shift employees, your restaurant can offer takeout or free delivery services. You should clearly state how you expect to get your product of service to the target audience.

After that, you need to identify the unique differentiating factors about your business, says Gurango. In short, what makes your business unique from all the other businesses that may be trying to address the same market.

Going back to your restaurant business, you now state that delivery services will be made in less than 10 minutes or you can offer products at more affordable prices.

"Unless you can state what makes your business different from other businesses, the investor will say, 'So what?" Gurango adds.

"All this should take no more than three to four minutes," he notes. The final minute should be spent talking about what you need from the person you are talking to and what's in it for him. For potential investors, this means indicating how much money you are looking for and what sort of return on investment you are willing to provide the investor. For a potential employee, you need to spell out what position you are looking to fill and what you are willing to offer the prospective employee.

Gurango, however, stressed that a good pitch is not a substitute for a well-thought business plan.

Communicate what you need

The pitch will only let you into the door, he says.

"The hardest part in closing ANY business deal for your company is communicating what you need. And that is what the pitch is all about," Gurango says.

Can you make a pitch from a mere idea? That's another matter, Gurango adds, because a lot of thinking is required for you to come up with a good pitch.

Again, remember a good pitch states a problem or the opportunity you want to address; describes your business; and indicates what you need from an investor, partner, supplier or a potential employee.

Based on his experience, Gurango observes that 9 out of 10 people spend a lot of time talking about their business without telling you anything about what they need from the person they are talking to.

"Whenever I get a call, I ask them what business they are in, and in most instances, they can't do it in the first few minutes. They oftentimes never get to the point of telling me what they need from me. That's when I tell them to think about what they want to do and what they need before moving ahead with their plans," Gurango adds.

Silver lining for mining industry starts to peep

By Amada T. Valino
Contributor

BEHIND the clouds that seem to cover the bright prospects for the mineral industry, there is now a glimpse of the silver lining.

No less than President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun to review laws that have impeded the application of the 1995 Philippine Mining Act such as the 1997 Indigenous People's Rights Act (Ipra) and the National Integrated Protected Areas System (Nipas) law, considered "strong civil rights measures that ideally benefit indigenous Filipinos."

According to Gozun, the President wants to know what provisions in these laws can be corrected by an administrative order—"to fast-track the revitalization of the country's mining industry."

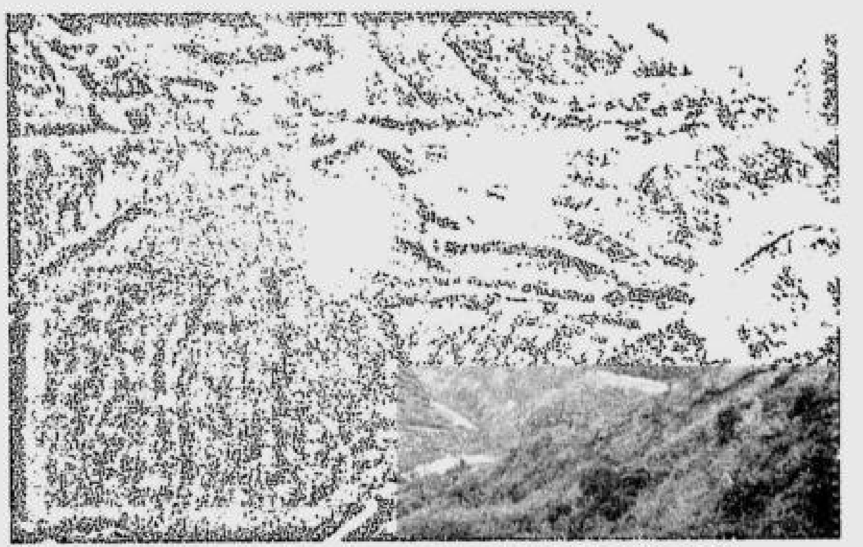
Gozun added that the President "had decided to offer the mining industry her active support because the industry was one of the few Philippine enterprises that posted a 40-percent growth in 2002 "after trailing with a 3.45-percent output the previous year."

Challenge

While aware of the "destructive potentials of an uncontrolled mining trade" such as what was brought by the Marcopper tragedy, President Macapagal nevertheless challenged the mining industry "to offer the public tangible evidence that a sustainable and environmentally manageable mining protocol is now in place in order to revitalize majority of the country's top mines, which were abandoned or rendered dormant following the 1997 Asian currency crisis."

Gozun concluded "that in the short term ... the government hopes to generate $242 million in mining investments from 12 mining projects that will annually yield about $147 million in potential revenues. While relatively small compared to its potential, the government's long-term plans could earn the country $1.8 billion from the projects in five years, and $2.15 billion in 10 years. In 10 years, the mining industry will be contributing about eight times of what it is now (generating)."

Make or break


UP is a review of laws that have impeded the application of the 1995 Philippine Mining Act.

With regard to the Mining Act, mining officials say "a decision by the Supreme Court on a legal challenge by tribesmen opposing full foreign ownership of local mines will make or break the future of mining. "(The director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau, Horacio Ramos, considers it as the biggest stumbling block to more investments" in the mining sector).

Gerard Brimo of the Chamber of Mines of the Philippines and chief executive officer of Philex Mining Corp. and Philex Gold Inc. said: "There's not a mineralized country that does not allow foreign mining because you need capital and technical know-how. And first and foremost, we don't have the capital. It is not true that they will benefit more. They (foreign investors) have to comply with our laws and pay taxes just like any other Filipino company.

Attract them back

Ramos said he expects the Supreme Court to give its decision, pending since 1997, to attract back many of the 50 foreign companies which were interested to explore for new mines in the Philippines and which had left due to the delays.

The issue of whether or not foreign investors should be allowed to own mining interests in the country is also of particular interest to the Board of Investments which is working out a plan to revive the mining industry, one of which is to provide incentives and assistance packages to attract foreign investments.

According to a news report, BOI managing head Gregory Domingo said that foreign ownership of the country's mineral resources is prohibited under the Constitution. As such, only a removal of that prohibition in the Constitution would allow the government to finally open up the mineral industry to foreign investors.

Domingo added: "Foreign participation in the mineral industry is necessary because they have the technology to more efficiently exploit the country's untapped mineral resources."

The report also said that no less than the Australia-New Zealand Chamber of Commerce has been asking the government to open up the sector "saying that a lot more investments from Australia would come into the country if the Philippine mining industry is liberalized."

Export power house

At a recent Annual National Mine Safety and Environment Prevention Conference in Baguio City, President Macapagal challenged the leaders of the mining industry to bring back its role of being the country's "export powerhouse" and help the government reduce poverty through the creation of jobs.

Edgar Martinez, president of the Mindanao Association for Mineral Industries Inc. (Mina), one of the active mining industry leaders, welcomes the challenge but called on the government to set the framework for economic growth with the mining companies doing implementation. And what is this framework?

Martinez said: "The framework we have been dreaming of is the Proposed National Minerals Policy, a policy which has remained in paper since 1998 and which should have been adopted a long time ago.

Now comes the good news that the government is finishing soon the National Minerals Policy (NMP) "that would serve as the vehicle for the revitalization of the minerals industry."

SILVER/ B2-5

Go for low-cost advertising that can yield returns

By Myrna R. Co
Contributor

AIDA Madroño, left, with Eureka dealers.

LOW-COST advertising can yield high returns, this is what Chito and Aida Madroño found out when they introduced "Word Factory" into their Eureka educational toy line in 1982.

The couple unabashedly admits that the product was their company's take on Parker Brothers' popular word game, "Boggle."

Within two years of its introduction in the market, "Word Factory" outshone "Boggle" not only in local sales but also in brand recall. Aida gives the credit first on the quality of "Word Factory" that gives the buyer value for its money. "And of course, we advertised," she adds.

As every marketing-savvy businessman will tell you, you may have an excellent service or product, but if no one knows about it, what good will it do you?

No, the couple didn't spend big bucks to spread the word around. Rather, the "Word Factory" advertising campaign may well be a model in low-cost advertising that worked.

GROWING YOUR BUSINESS

"You might call it a stroke of good luck," Chito says, recalling how the product got enormous exposure in a popular noontime show of the 1980s, "Patok na Patok," hosted by Ariel Ureta.

Played on TV

The show constructed a huge grid on the set, complete with gigantic letter cubes—a magnified replica of their product. For many months, contestants got to play the game on TV, while being viewed by millions. "As the televised game was called 'Word Factory' too, the mileage we got was immeasurable," Chito recalls. "All it cost us was 24 pieces of the product a day."

This set the tone for advertising not only "Word Factory" but other Eureka products like Kinder Kit, Crossword, chess sets, and many others.

Soon, Aida and Chito were sponsoring campus tournaments, where their Word Factory and Crossword sets were used by competitors as well as put up as prizes. They also went the route of mall tournaments, but always with a partner-company and a partner-mall, so they were able to split costs.

Bringing samples

Chito, who is a sought-after speaker on entrepreneurship and marketing, makes it a point to bring samples of his products when he lectures to a class. Invariably, he goes home empty-handed. Well, not really, for he would have a substantial order or two tucked up in his sleeves.

Eureka products have never been advertised in expensive print ads and TV/radio commercials. The only time print media was used was when Aida bought a classified ad in a broadsheet, inviting people to sell their products. The P300-ad resulted in a network of Eureka product dealers and sellers.

Their products are not difficult to sell. Chito shares some of his marketing secrets:

1. Go for attractive packaging—Packaging is the product's face to the public. Eureka products boast of world-class packaging, featuring classy designs and sturdy materials. The package must, of course, include all your contact numbers so that interested parties can readily reach you.

2. Branding is important, but is neglected by most local manufacturers. Chito and Aida slowly but surely built up the "Eureka" brand so that today, they are now being sought out by retailers.

3. Develop your niche. In the case of Eureka, the Madroños pursued the high-end market who go for quality. "The market is not so big, so we thought we might as well hit the 'significant few.' The strategy was effective, too, in discouraging copy-cats."

The Madroños belong to a growing breed of budget-conscious small entrepreneurs who have shown that there is no limit to the ingenious ways one can make one's product known.

Some businessmen have made word-of-mouth work. Others have engaged in exchange deals with newspapers, magazines, and radio and TV stations.

Subdivision-based shops and stores have made good use of moving ads—announcements posted on the back of pedicabs. A maker of uniforms advertises its service in campus newspapers. An automotive repair shop places ads in the homeowners' association newsletter. Still others have used the church pulpit to make announcements: one store owner in a neighborhood announced during Sunday Mass that he had openings for its sales crew and "incidentally" announced his store's opening as well.

And yes, there are a number of small manufacturers who have managed to be featured in stories in the Philippine Daily Inquirer and other newspapers for free! All of them attest that such exposure has been more effective than paid advertising.

Tom Egelhoff in www.smalltownmarketing,com liberally doles out low-cost advertising tips. These include:

1. Can you barter for the cost of ad production? Maybe the newspaper office needs your service or product in exchange for an ad about your store.

2. Try advertising consistently in the classifieds. These ads may draw more customers than more expensive display ads.

3. Try an editorial style ad. These are ads that look like actual stories in the newspaper. Develop a good headline and 50 percent more people will read the article than would read an ad of the same size.

4. Split advertising costs with the people who sell to you. Vendors and manufacturers are always looking for exposure. Let people know you carry their products and have the vendor pick up part of the ad cost.

5. Share ad costs with neighbor-businesses. Video stores and pizza parlors are natural partners. Have coupons to each others stores or share the cost of flyers.

6. Place your radio ads in off hours or in unusual locations for less cost. Many times you can still reach your target market with these spots.

7. Instead of a one-time big splash ad, be consistent with frequent small ads that work.

8. Some monthly magazines sometimes have unsold ad space at the end of the month; they will sell at a discount then.

9. What will suppliers give you by way of point of purchase materials? Posters, stand ups, handouts. Some have excellent display racks you can use.

10. Some national chains like Coke and Pepsi provide outdoor signs for businesses. There are also indoor lighted signs you write on with special markers to advertise your special offers.

11. Can you sponsor a community event? A fun-run, basketball tournament, or other event that will be well-publicized in the community. Your name may not be prominently displayed but sometimes the positive exposure in the community will bring in new customers.

12. Exploit the media you use to the

GO FOR/ B2-7

PRE-SCHOOL girl plays with Eureka educational products

Silver lining for mining ...

From page B2-4

Gozun instructed the MGB to conduct a final nationwide consultation for the NMP involving various sectors of society "to make sure all sectors who have issues, for or against mining and the minerals industry, be part of this effort."

Aside from the immediate industry stakeholders, the DENR MGB has likewise sought the participation of various civil society groups, non-government, people's, Catholic bishops, and religious organizations, professionals, the academe, local government units, government agencies and indigenous cultural communities.

The news report also quoted Ramos as saying that inputs of the final consultation will be consolidated and integrated into a Final NMP Draft. This will be submitted to the Philippine Council for Sustainable Development (PCSD), the clearing house for all sustainable development policies in the country, for approval.

Ramos gave the assurance that with the PCSD's approval, expect a National Minerals Policy duly approved by the DENR secretary in the form of a department administrative order and endorsed by the President.

And here's another ray of hope for the mining industry: President Macapagal has created the Natural Resources Development Corp. to develop dormant and high potential mining areas that can be listed in the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Alfredo Rosal Jr., president of NRDC, has pushed for the revival of the mining industry because of the large number of idle and abandoned mines that have been placed under the government's Asset Privatization Trust.

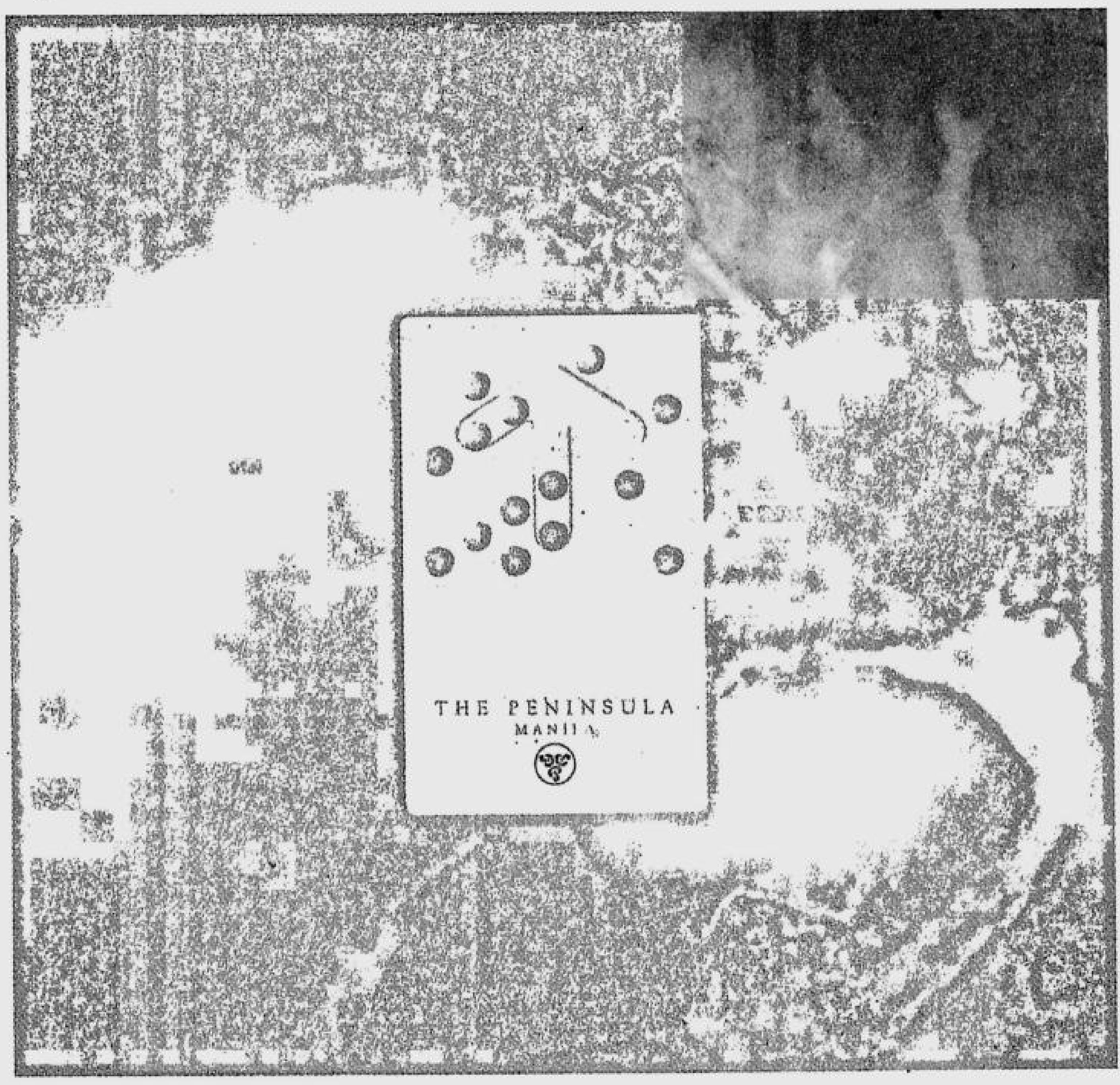
The BOI believes that reviving the country's mining sector would largely contribute to poverty alleviation in the rural and upland areas in the country where most of the mineral resources remain untapped and it has identified the mineral sector as among the highest potential and strategic industries which need priority support.

BOI figures show that the country's unknown metallic resources when processed are estimated to be worth $852 million. The Philippines was the world's fifth biggest producer of gold and the ninth biggest producer of copper back in the 1980s. Gold is a by-product in the mining copper.

It used to count among the world's top 10 producers of gold, copper, nickel and chromite in 1980 and industry analysts say that the country remains one of the least explored sites in the so-called ring of fire (an area susceptible to earthquakes and volcanic eruption but rich in mineral wealth).

The report concluded: "The BOI noted that the mineral industry has vast industry linkages that create multiplier effects in terms of employment and economic activities contributing significantly to the enhancement of micro and small and medium enterprises."

Fortunately, behind the clouds, there now seems to be a silver lining for the mining industry. It is now included among the industries to be promoted through sectoral development programs and no less than President Macapagal has given the go signal to fast-track its revitalization, a tangible sign of the administration's thrust to promote the mining industry.



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Editor Aries Espinosa

GlobeSolutions' MobileMail 1st wireless e-mail solution service in the country

INNOVATIONS leader Globe Telecom ushers in a powerful breakthrough in mobile communications, MobileMail. This office-on-the-go makes it possible for subscribers to access their corporate applications and e-mail or have their very own virtual office while on the road; surely the fastest way to be ahead of the corporate race while in transit.

The benefits of this pioneering service have already been witnessed firsthand by the Mapalad and PocketPC PDA phone enthusiasts at a demonstration by GlobeSolutions, where they tried out the real-time information that lets you act quickly on critical business information with the aid of a PDA phone and the fast GPRS connection provided by Globe. It also offers flexibility for those on the go but with the assurance of a secure transfer of information due to its industry standard, end-to-end security and encryption methods of information protection like Advanced Encryption System (AES) and Secure Socket Layer (SSL) encryption.

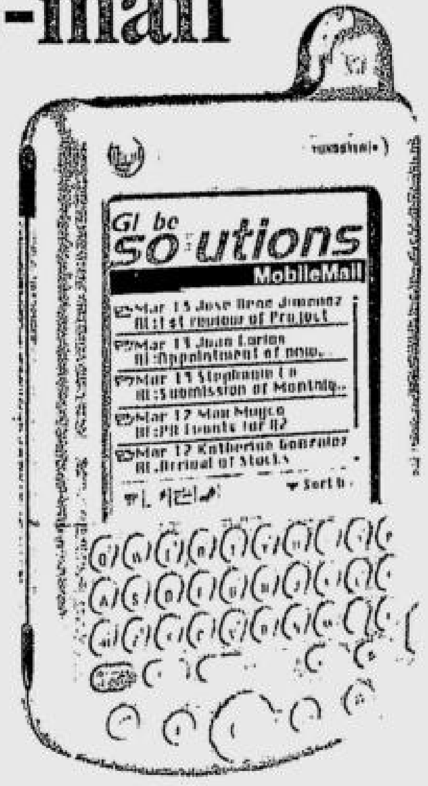
Globe's GPRS (Global Packet Radio Service) connection operates at a speed that runs on a wide range of ,bandwidths that makes sending and receiving data such as e-mail and web access, thus enabling subscribers to get valuable information anytime, anywhere.

Be electrified by MobileMail as it makes business easier through an array of multi-tasking services that are exclusive only to Globe Handyphone subscribers. It lets you access documents stored on your PC; send, receive and read corporate mail; handle e-mail attachments; view your contact list; surf the net and manage your appointments through a variety of the latest PDA phone models. What's more to rave about is fact that MobileMail is instantly usable so you don't need costly hardware upgrades, nor do you need complicated training to use it. You just download and deploy, and let MobileMail do wonders for you.

To maximize the MobileMail service, top-of-the-line PDA phones are introduced by Globe Handyphone. Choose from the variety of PDA handsets like the Palm Tungsten W, QTEK 1010, the Handspring TREO 270 and Handspring TREO 180, which offer a lot more of features aside from serving as your electronic organizer and phone at the same time. With MobileMail and the PDA phone of your choice, you're equipped with a fully packed, powerful combination that's a must for people driven by their steady eye on success.

To be ahead of the race, you have to be on top of everything and venture to an unexplored field of that others would not dare cross. This is the very reason GlobeSolutions pioneers the latest breakthroughs in corporate communications to bring its subscribers ahead of the business community. With GlobeSolutions' MobileMail, corporate needs are easily met and higher business capacity is achieved. This proves that with Globe, the real leader in innovations, you will never be out of reach, no matter if you're on the go.

For inquiries on MobileMail, call GlobeSolutions hotline 730-1999 or e-mail GlobeSolutions at globesolutions@globetel.com.ph.



Globe's MobileMail introduced to PDA aficionados

THE REGISTRATION line literally spiraled along the stretch of restaurants at Greenbelt 2, as throngs of PDA aficionados lined up for the presentation of the newest breakthrough in corporate communications. In what was dubbed as the "4th Pinoy Pocket PC Mobility", Pinoy Pocket PC enthusiasts lounged ,in the cozy environment of Café Soleil Moderne while Palm aficionados jampacked Restaurant 12 for the regular MaPalad Group gathering and in time for the pre-introduction and demonstration of GlobeSolutions' MobileMail service.

TECH-savvy Chris Cheng, head of Globe's technical and wireless applications, gives an enticing demo of MobileMail.

More than 200 enthusiasts were present to experience this new innovation in corporate communications. Globe Telecom collaborated with Pinoy Pocket PC and the MaPalad Group to hold the event that will help usher in the change in the current wave of telecommunications and providing dynamic ways of doing business and living personal lives.

Globe Telecom's head of the wireless business group Ferdz dela Cruz enthused, "Globe Telecom has come out of the box to trail-blaze solutions to our subscribers' various necessities and these services are the keys that will propel their lives to the next level."

Maridol Ylanan, head for GlobeSolutions corporate sales, enticed the audience further with the introduction of MobileMail as anyone's "office on the go". And for any business-minded individual who's always out in the field, wireless connectivity is a must.

Lucky Pocket PC and MaPalad Group members got a load of premium items from Globe like the Nokia 3650 and the dream gadget of PDA enthusiasts, the Tungsten W and QTek 1010.

MaPalad Group president Eric Cham lauded GlobeSolutions' MobileMail, "It would definitely benefit our members since connectivity is a must for us, and actually 200 members already confirmed attendance just through our e-mail invitation to this event, which means they were really interested in the service."

"MobileMail is perfect for techies because it's a service that makes owning a PDA complete. We already have the gadget and now MobileMail puts everything together." Eric fervently added.

With the coming of the MobileMail service, PDA aficionados will be able to access easier corporate life, a surefire way of taking mobility to the next level. Surely more life-changing innovations can be expected from Globe Telecom, the dynamic leader in digital communications.

POSING after a rousing launch are Baby Sto. Domingo and Carmina Marquez of GlobeSolutions, head for GlobeSolutions corp sales Maridol Ylanan, Globe Telecom's head of the wireless business group Ferdz dela Cruz, Pinoy Pocket PC president Carlo Guerrero and head of Globe's technical and wireless applications Chris Cheng.

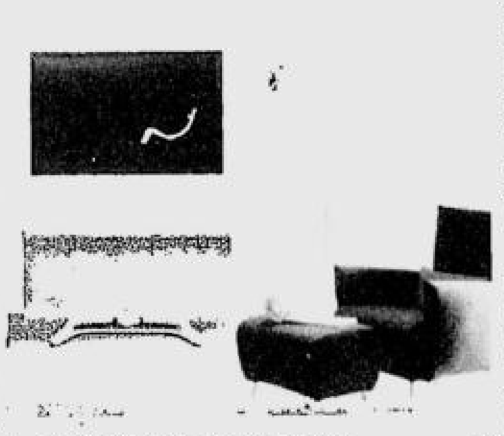
THE EAGER MaPalad techies jam-packed the MobileMail launch to the rafters.

PRESENT at the launch of the new Aquos during the annual dealers convention were (from left) Kenny Nuyda, Philippine Daily Inquirer AVP for advertising, Roberto Luis E. Littaua, Sharp Philippines Corp. PR and advertising manager, Koji Domoto, Sharp Philippines AVP and division general manager, domestic sales, Pepito R. Olarte, Inquirer VP for advertising, and Larry Mariano, Inquirer advertising account manager.

Sharp introduces 37-inch LCD TV

SHARP (Philippines) Corp., a leading visual, audio and home appliance manufacturer, launches its two new 37-inch LCD television models during its annual dealers convention recently. Displayed were the LC-37BT5 home theater application model and the LC-37HV4U, a standard model.

Developed under Sharp's world-leading LCD technology, these new Aquos platform models feature the Twin Inverter Backlight System with Sharp's newly developed Hi-Vision LCD Panel. This yields brightness of 450 cd/m2, the highest level in the industry. With the world's highest resolution in a 37V-inch LCD, the new LCD TVs deliver finely detailed, super-realistic high definition pictures ideal for digital Hi-Vision broadcasts. Moreover, its QS (Quick Shoot) Technology reproduces clear "easy on the eyes" pictures by reducing the sense of visual lag in images depicting high-speed motion.



The LC-37BT5 is a home theater model equipped with a 5.1 channel Digital Theater System based on Sharp's 1-bit Digital Amplifier System. Housed in a thin-profile console style enclosure, it includes "tall-boy" style rear surround speakers and a sub-woofer that reproduces impressive bass notes for a total of six loudspeaker units. Now with a full-fledged big-screen Aquos home theater, Sharp enables users to enjoy impressive audio with 150 watts of total audio output. Coupled with real-life, flicker-free images, more pleasurable viewing time on the couch is ensured.

The LC-37HV4U is a standard model designed to match the user's lifestyle. The 37-inch models makes six the total model lineup of Aquos LCD TVs, currently available in 13, 15, 20 and 30-inch models. Because they're Aquos, these models offer many attractive features in terms of environmental performance that go far beyond similar CRT-based TVs or plasma TVs. The long backlight lifetime of approximately 60,000 hours, low-power consumption and slim, lightweight design ensures the Aquos' place as the future of visual entertainment yet now available.

Virus-killing air-cons ensure breathable indoor air

SHARP (Philippines) Corp., a leading audio, visual and home appliances manufacturer, introduced recently six new window-type room air-conditioners with the proprietary Plasmacluster Ion Generator technology. In a joint testing with the Kitasato Research Center of Environmental Sciences in Japan, this technology has been verified to inactivate airborne viruses. Similarly, Sharp's Plasmacluster Ions were proven to be effective in eliminating airborne odors, bacteria and molds in indoor air by several institutions worldwide.

By releasing into the air an identical number of positive and negative ions (Plasmacluster ions) generated by a built-in Plasmacluster ion generating device, airborne viruses as well as mold and fungi are quickly broken down and inactivated, resulting to highly effective air purification. Far better than the simple filtering of conventional air-conditioners and air purifiers, Sharp Plasmacluster Air-cons flush out these cluster ions to seek out and eliminate harmful elements.

Three remote control and three manual control models are made available in cooling capacities of ¾ horsepower (8,206 'kj/hr), 1 hp (9,747 kj/hr) and 1.5 hp (13,331). The Plasmacluster technology is also available in Sharp's split-type air-conditioners in 1, 1.5 and 2-hp models and the FU-40SE-P, an air purifier model ideal for air-conditioned living rooms, bedrooms, work areas, toilets and other areas up to approximately 31 sqm.

Aside from effectively eliminating harmful airborne elements, Sharp Plasmacluster also maintains fresh indoor air by maintaining a high level of negative ions. This simulates a refreshing environment such as inside a forest, near a fountain or waterfalls. Sharp Philippines assistant vice president and domestic sales division general manager Koji Domoto states, "with this one-of-a-kind product, we can expect Sharp to quickly build its name in the air-conditioner business under the concept of using Plasmacluster ions to clean the indoor air we breathe wherever we may be."

SHOWN discussing the finer aspects of the Plasmacluster technology with a customer is Naoya Takahashi, general manager of Asia Appliances Marketing Center, Sharp Electronics Malaysia Sdn Bhd Singapore branch.

Clips

MScM qualifying program

FRESH graduates who wish to pursue a master's degree in management are enjoined to take the University of Asia and the Pacific School of Management's (UA&P SMN) MScM Qualifying Program (MQP) from May 19 to 31. The Master of Science in Management (MScM) is the UA&P SMN's flagship program that helps fast track its students' managerial, executive and leadership skills. It equips its graduates with the knowledge, skills, and attitude to transform the challenges of the 21st century into business opportunities and socially responsible enterprises and help them become management professionals with an entrepreneurial mindset for the Asia Pacific region. Registration is on May 19 at 8:15 a.m. Call (632) 637-0912 ext 317 or 387 and [illegible] Clarisse Peteza or Janice Felix.

Garden wedding fair

THE CAROUSEL Court, 2nd floor, Festival Supermall, Filinvest, Alabang, is the venue of the Garden Wedding Fair scheduled on from May 20 to 31. The event brings together essential suppliers for weddings and for the first time gathers select quality suppliers and wholesalers of flowers and other garden materials from Davao, Cavite, Laguna and Iloilo. The added attraction of the event is the bridal gown display of two promising designers' associations: The Fashion Achievers Design Club headed by Tristan Yap and the Design Society of the Philippines headed by Jonathan Pagaduan. The event is organized by Philtrade Exhibits. For details, call 820-7879 or 820-1570.

GTF auditions

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation (GTF), in cooperation with the National Parks Development Committee (NPDC) announces its auditions for its 26th theater season on May 19, 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the rehearsal hall of the Concert at the Park Auditorium, Luneta, Manila.. The auditions are open to professional theater artists and aspiring actors and actresses who want to perform and experience the discipline of theater. Applicants must be between 13 to 35 years old, male or female, with pleasing personality and stage presence. They must prepare an updated resume, a colored close-up and full-body photo, a monologue in English or Pilipino, and a song and dance number. Applicants are advised to cue their minus one tapes. Interested applicants can call 528-0603 or 0918-9212866 and look for Alwin Ignacio.

Kasibulan art exhibit

TRADERS Hotel Manila is sponsoring the recent works of all Filipino women artists Kasibulan. The ongoing art exhibit slated until today, May 19 at the mezzanine of the hotel pays tribute to all Filipino women about their femininity and their role in society. Participating artists are Brenda Fajardo, Imelda Cajipe Endaya, Serena Borras, Ofelia Calcetas Santos, Rara Carrillo, Aila de Ocampo, Kara Escay, Ester Sevilla Garcia, Bing Chanco Libatique, Nina Libatique, Clarissa Perez, Tita Rosel, Teya Tan, Rosel Valenzuela and Nadie Xavier. The event is organized by Philtrade Exhibits and is hosted by former Miss Philippines and New York-based model Amelia dela Cruz. For details, call 820-7879 or 820-1570.

18TH BEST EMPLOYER IN ASIA

Hotel puts fun, leisure into managing employees

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IF THERE is one thing that hoteliers worth their salt know for sure, it is that they need to have a driven, motivated and satisfied staff to be able to keep their hotel ahead of the competition.

It is a basic truth in the hospitality industry that staff who are content and feel that they have a good reason to get up and smile in the morning provide better service to the hotel's guests.

And hotels live and die by the quality of their service.

Going about developing a motivated staff, however, takes more than just giving high salaries and the customary benefits.

For the management of Discovery Suites, a premiere serviced apartment complex of 225 suites in Ortigas Center, making the staff happy involves a lot of little but meaningful things that do not come with a price tag.

'Jacktivities'

Management led by general manager Jack A. Tuason, for instance, used to conduct "town hall" meetings with the staff where the managers discuss office issues with the staff before they do some bonding activity together such as games and parties.

The rank and file members are encouraged to actively participate in the meetings, with management expecting them to come up with new ideas to improve service to the guests.

No idea is considered too wild or impossible.

The town hall meetings have since been modified into "Jacktivities" where the bonding session takes place first before at least half of the 110 employees buckle down to discuss important issues.

A recurring theme in these meetings is the message that they are pulling in one direction, and that is to make Discovery Suites the best-run hotel in the country.

For the bonding sessions, Discovery Suites staff have already gone to the movies, went karting and tested their skills in the bowling alley.

Employees celebrating their birthdays are also treated to lunch and they get to choose the kind of food they want to eat, aside from their usual cafeteria food. Some already had Jollibee parties and ate food from Kentucky Fried Chicken complete with the mascot.

Tuason says in an interview that the idea behind these sessions is to create a culture where the staff look out for each other and feel good about working together.

The casual, relaxed atmosphere makes the people more comfortable about expressing ideas because they know that they are among friends.

Guest for a day

Management even encourages staff to stay in one of the suites for one night to know first-hand how it is to be a guest and the services that they get.

Tuason, however, stresses that Discovery Suites staff know that work is not all about fun and games.

"We have a culture of winning here and the expectations from the people are very high. Not everyone is cut out to be part of the team but once they are in, they know that they will get the support that they need," Tuason says.

Tuason says putting together a good staff starts from the hiring process.

"We had the opportunity to start from scratch so we were able to get the right people who will be part of our environment of success. We wanted people with the right attitude and the right frame of mind," he says.

With this kind of staff, Tuason says it becomes easier to let them have the elbow room to decide on matters they are responsible for.

He says he is not the type to ramrod an idea down the throats of his staff, rather someone who likes to take part in discussions until the group comes out with the best idea—be it for an event or marketing campaign.

"We always think about how we can do things differently. What is the purpose of our efforts. We want to simplify things that is why we do not have a lot of memos in this company. We just do things that work," Tuason says.

The staff's efforts have certainly paid off as Discovery Suites has been able to keep a relatively high occupancy rate despite the big hit that the hotel industry took because of the drop in tourist arrivals and the general downturn in the economy.

As much as 60 percent of its suites, for instance, are booked by long-staying guests who live in the hotel for at least a month. Some are even staying for three years.

Another testimony to the perhaps unorthodox but nevertheless effective means of motivating staff is Discovery Suites' being named the lone Philippine firm in the list of Asia's 20 Best Employers, as chosen by global human resources outsourcing firm Hewitt Associates, in partnership with the Asian Wall Street Journal and the Far Eastern Economic Review.

Discovery Suites landed 18th in the list of Asia's best employers, which included such companies as the Ritz-Carlton, Microsoft, Philips Semiconductors and the Four Seasons.

Surveys

These companies were chosen based on how highly the employees speak of their company and how well top management is able to develop a common understanding and support for a common direction for the company with the staff.

Hewitt, FEER and the Asian Wall Street Journal came up with the list after conducting surveys with employees, chief executives and HR professionals at more than 300 companies.

Covered in the survey were companies in China, Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Thailand.

Tuason says some 50 employees of Discovery Suites took part in the survey and the subsequent interviews.

When he learned that Discovery Suites not only made it to the list of top employers in the Philippines, but become the only Philippine firm to be part of the Asian list, he was beside himself with joy for his people.

"It is a huge honor for us because we are just this little company in the Philippines," he says.

The only thing left for Discovery Suites to do now, is to try and make sure that they stay on that list.

BEST EMPLOYERS

JACK A. Tuason (center) is shown accepting the award for Discovery Suites. Also in photo are from left: Susan Grace Rivera-Manalo, country manager, Hewitt Associates; Ravi Virmani, market leader for South Asia, Hewitt Associates; Vice President Teofisto Guingona; Edward Fereira, president, Management Association of the Philippines, and Cesar Virata, board member of Businessworld.

Go for low-cost . . .

From page B2-5

fullest. If your message is verbal, you don't need TV. Use radio, billboards and newspaper to the fullest.

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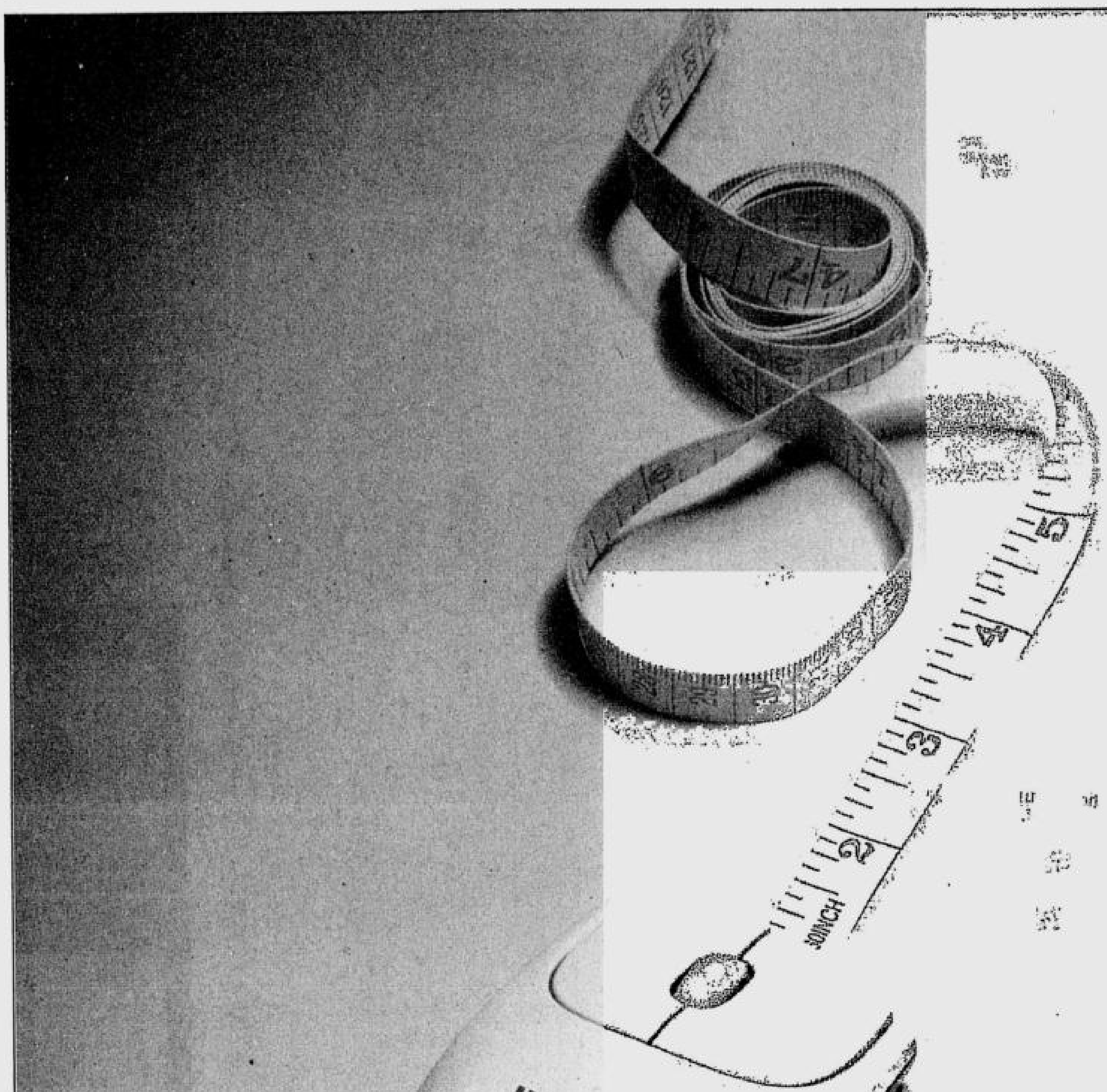
(Pacito Madroño will be one of the speakers in Appreciation Course on Entrepreneurship or ACE of the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries. Call Claire Esteban for reservations at 9297076-79 or 923-7116. You may also register online at www.up.edu.ph~issi.)



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Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

'CROSS TRAINING'

Developing a new breed of professionals

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

ATTY
M.D.
PROF
CLASS RECORD

CROSS training used to be a word that was confined to the field of sports. Not anymore. These days, the term is heard more frequently among high-flying career people and professionals who are always on the lookout for better job opportunities.

Just as athletes today know that they can not just be mere runners, or weightlifters to remain competitive, so do today's crop of professionals, particularly those in the more developed countries.

This way of thinking, however, has yet to be imbibed by Philippine professionals.

Limited view

Unfortunately, most Filipinos with the potential to go for the choices of jobs in the world market still think that they are stuck with their profession.

Doctors are just doctors. Lawyers can only be lawyers. And they are happy with it.

Samuel D. Bernal of the LA-Boston Bio-Research Group, thus, came to Manila recently to talk with health professionals, members of the scientific community and business people to share with them the opportunities that await them in the global job market.

Bernal, for instance, says that there is a severe shortage in the United States for nurses who not only provide nursing bare, but are also knowledgeable about information technology and management so that they can take part in clinical trials of pharmaceutical firms.

More than just a nurse

These nurses who take part in clinical trials can earn as much as $80,000 a year, more than double the $35,000 they would have gotten if they remained nurses providing basic nursing care.

There is also demand in Germany for lawyers who can assist in the registration of drugs. This means that the lawyers should also have some training in medicine and even engineering skills.

"There is now a blurring of the lines between professions because of globalization and the good news is that Filipinos are really in a position to compete for these big jobs because of our flexibility, our multi-cultural background and our ability to adapt to change," Bernal says.

Multi-tasking

Bernal knows whereof he speaks.

He graduated with a degree in Chemistry from the University of Illinois and got a PhD in biochemical pathology from the University of Chicago where he also completed his medical studies. He completed specialty training in internal medicine at Johns Hopkins University and subspecialty training in cancer from Harvard Medical School.

Bernal is also a lawyer with a degree from the Loyola Law School and is licensed to practice law in California. He also got a Master's degree in Business Administration from Pepperdine University.

Aside from teaching at the UCLA, he is also a consultant in biotechnology for the Philippine senate and the Department of Agriculture.

Bernal is also a businessman, having founded Strata Lucida, a biotechnology company in California that manufactures nutritional supplements and skin care products. He also has a molecular biology research laboratory, specializing in protein biochemistry.

Upgrade skills

He says his exposure to the different fields of business and academe in the US and in other parts of the world made him realize the vast opportunities that are available for Filipinos, if only they would take the time to upgrade their skills and widen their horizon.

"We should be made more aware of changes in the professions. It is unfortunate that because perhaps of financial pressure, many of us do not plan for the long-term, tending to go for the next job that pays well. It pays to invest in knowledge," he stresses.

Bernal also says that Filipinos do not necessarily have to go abroad to get these jobs. Because of competition, American and European companies are willing to outsource part of their operations to countries where there is a competitive labor force.

Examples are call centers that service the customer service requirements of top corporations and service companies that are responsible for the backroom operations of multinational companies. The list can go on.

Adding to the list

"I see Filipinos, for instance, becoming a major source for digital editing services and scriptwriting for Hollywood. We can do it," Bernal says.

The challenge, he says, is to broaden the minds of the professionals to make them aware of global trends and act accordingly to take advantage of the tremendous growth opportunities.

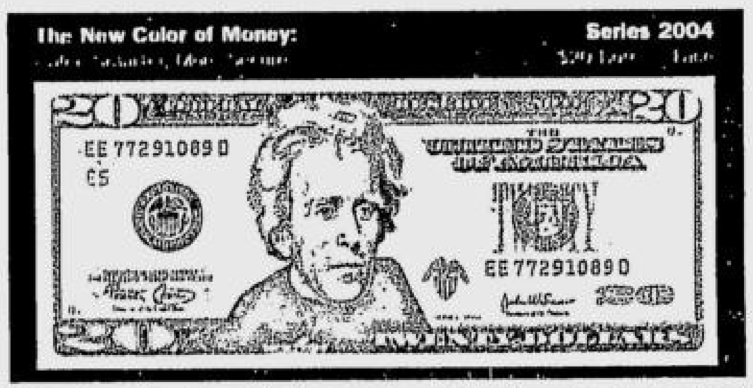
Not new

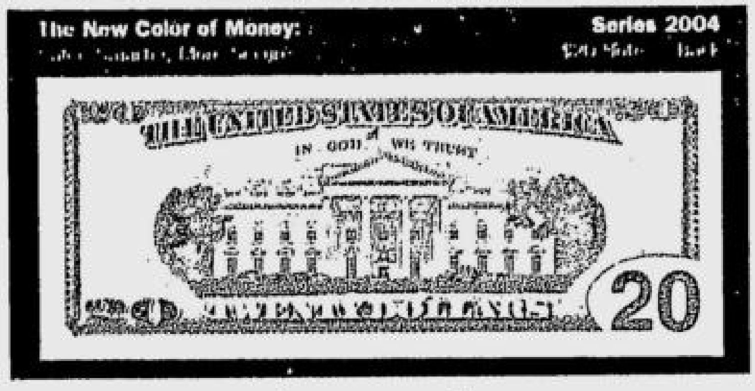
Bernal says that the trend is actually not new. It started close to 12 years ago, but additional professional training used to be limited to people in the academe such as scientists and doctors.

Bernal says he wants to open up the training and skills upgrading program to all professionals because there is just too many positions to be filled up in the world market.

Bernal has committed to come to the Philippines to give seminars to professionals but most of the training will be done through the Internet, with certificates to be handed out after about three months.

"There is growth out there and we should take the lead," he says.





New color of money

THE WIDELY used $20 note gets a facelift after the United States government unveiled a new design with enhanced security features and subtle background colors.

The new design is part of an ongoing effort to stay ahead of the counterfeiting US currency.

The most noticeable difference in the notes is the subtle green, peach and blue colors featured in the background.

Different colors will be used for different denominations, which will help everyone—particularly those who are visually impaired—to tell denominations apart.

While consumers should not use color to check the authenticity of their currency, color does add complexity to the note, making counterfeiting more difficult.

The new bills will have the same size, but will have enhanced portraits and historical images of Andrew Jackson on the face of the note and the White House on the back.

The redesign also features symbols of freedom—a blue eagle in the background, and a metallic green eagle and shield to the right of the portrait in the case of the $20 note.

The new $20 design retains three important security features that were first introduced in the late 1990s and are easy for consumers and merchants alike to check:

1. The watermark—the faint image similar to the large portrait, which is part of the paper itself and is visible from both sides when held up to the light.

2. The security thread—also visible from both sides when held up to the light, this vertical strip of plastic is embedded in the paper. "USA twenty" and a small flag are visible along the thread.

3. The color-shifting ink—the numeral "20" in the lower-right corner on the face of the note changes from copper to green when the note is tilted. The color shift is more dramatic and easier to see on the new notes.

Because these features are difficult for counterfeiters to reproduce well, they often do not try. Counterfeiters hope that cash-handlers and the public will not check their money closely.

"US currency is a worldwide symbol of security and integrity. This new design will help us keep it that way, by protecting against counterfeiting and making it easier for people to confirm the authenticity of their hard-earned money," US Treasury Secretary John W. Snow said.

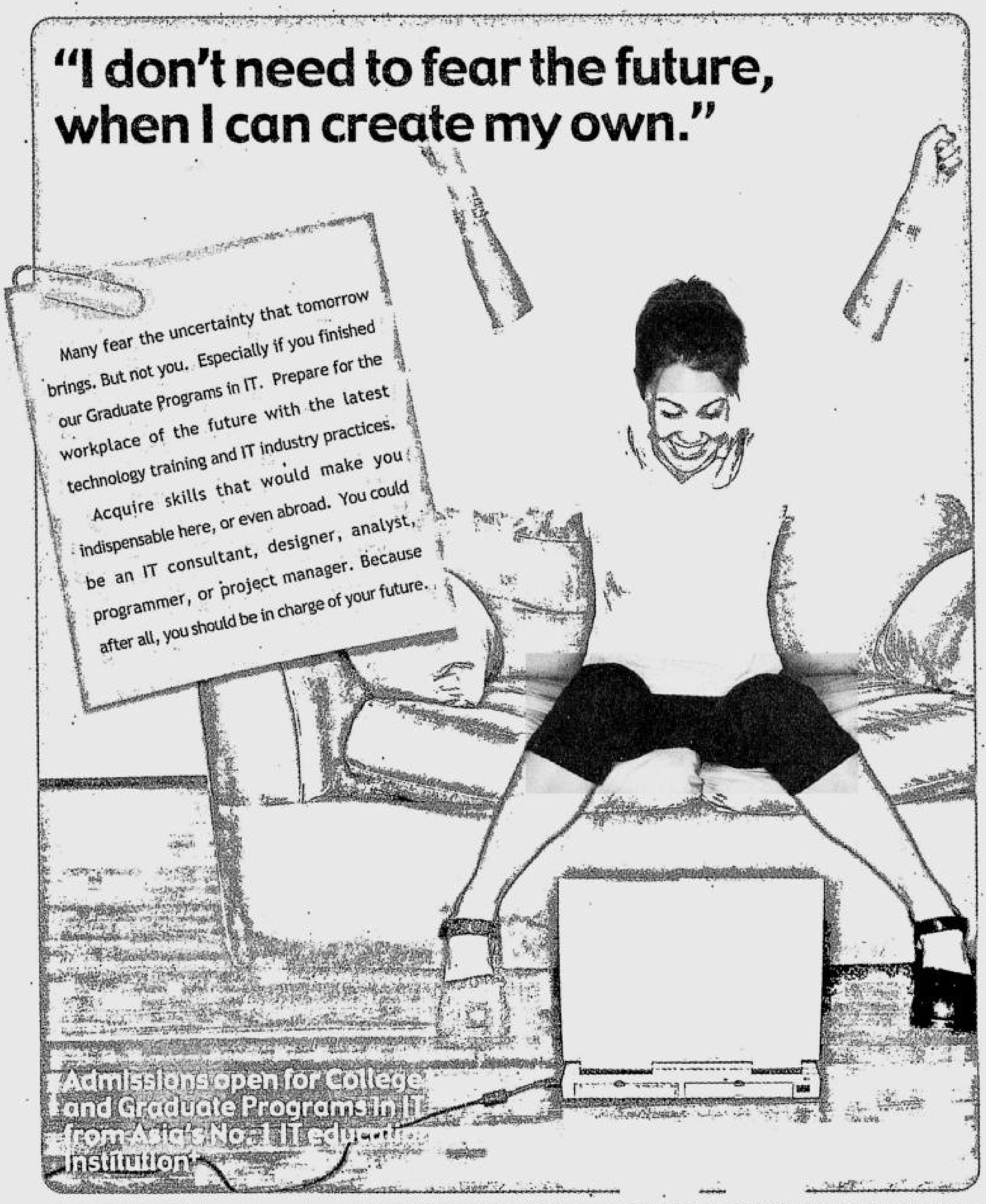
"In addition to keeping their currency safe from counterfeiters, we are working to ensure that more of those dollars stay in the pockets of American families. The swift enactment of the President's Jobs and Growth package should do just that."

Counterfeiters are turning increasingly to digital methods, as advances in technology make digital counterfeiting easier and cheaper.

In 1995, less than 1 percent of counterfeit notes detected in the US was digitally produced. By 2002, the number had grown to nearly 40 percent.

The new $20 note will be issued late this year, with new designs for the $50 and $100 following in 2004 and 2005.

The redesign of the $5 and $10 notes is under consideration, but the $1 and $2 notes will not be redesigned. Even after the new money is issued, older-design notes will remain legal tender.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Editor **Louie C. Camino**

ENTERTAINMENT

Willie, director fight over woman'

THE DIRECTOR of the Saturday afternoon show that grants viewers' wishes, "Willingly Yours" on ABS-CBN, was replaced after he reportedly got into a fight with show host Willie Revillame over a female staff member.

Effective last May 5, the show's head director, Willy Cuevas, was replaced due to his alleged romantic involvement with the staff member, according to another staff member who refused to be identified.

The incident came with rumors that said "Willingly Yours" is facing cancellation, allegedly because of poor ratings.

But both Revillame and members of the staff denied this.

The staff member said Cuevas, who was both director and head scriptwriter of the show, has been replaced by Jimmy Dasal as director and Joseph Ryan Aquino as head scriptwriter.

In a phone interview with INQUIRER Entertainment on Saturday, Revillame confirmed that there had indeed been conflict within the show, but he refused to give details.

"What happened was the usual misunderstanding between staff members," he said. "This happens to every show. That's all I have to say. Its no big deal."

"Sir Willie was firm in his stand that work must not be mixed with personal affairs, and we support him," the staff member said. "Direk Willy refused to honor that, so there was no other way for him but to leave.

"In fairness to Sir Willie, he sincerely wanted to patch things up with the director," the staff member

WILLIE / C7

REVILLAME

Clash triggers talk of show's cancellation

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SANCHEZ weighs her options.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Marissa Sanchez loses weight, gains self-esteem

/C4

VELASQUEZ

Regine remains on top

/C2

GUY AND PIP

Everybody loves a love team

/C2

DID YOU KNOW...

Spotted strolling at Rockwell's Power Plant Mall last Thursday night were the controversial lovers, Parañaque **Mayor Joey Marquez** and talk show host and actress **Kris Aquino**. According to the INQUIRER source, Joey and Kris were not holding hands while walking, and were surrounded by bodyguards. There's no more hiding it for Kris, mother of **Josh**, and the other "J" in her life.

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Everybody loves a love team

By Jose Javier Reyes
Contributor

YOU WOULD think that in this day and age, when you have Internet technology and telephones capable of doing anything, certain givens in life would have already become extinct. Not!

Inasmuch as we bask in the age of Speed Chic, spread epidemics easily through international travel and cannot live without CNN, we are still enamored by love teams.

What exactly is a love team? Definition: Two (hopefully, presumably, although arguably) beautiful young actors (not necessarily sharing the same talent manager) thrown together by fate and the marketing department of a major media company. They are packaged, peddled and immortalized through all the possible convolutions of print, television, radio and film to resemble heterosexual homo sapiens existing for the sheer reason of love, sweet love. Their immortality is guaranteed by a steady yet choreographed flow of pictorials, rumors and, hopefully, projects.

FOREVE
StephB.

Amidst the plunder of the museum in Baghdad, the mangled corpses from terrorist explosions scattered all over the globe, and the threat that someone sneezing beside you can punctuate your present reincarnation in a number of quarantined days, the love team is a symbol of hope and escape. Mars and Venus. Yin and Yang. The Captain and Tenille.

Love is the answer

Sure enough, whether one refers to the time of Rogelio de la Rosa and Carmen Rosales who sang under a mango tree, or the incomparable Nida Blanca boogie-ing with the genteel Nestor de Villa, down the line to Eddie Gutierrez (before Annabel) and Susan Roces (way before FPJ), or Amalia and Juancho, Rosemarie and Pepito, etcetera, etcetera, Philippine media history would completely crumble without these signposts of decades signifying shifts of generations.

For how can we understand who we are without underlying the once-upon-a-time existence of Guy and Manny, Guy and Cocoy, Guy and Pip? And that doll: My God! Who can erase Maria Leonora Teresa from our Jungian collective unconscious? Throw in Vi and Bot in the fermenting cauldron of imaginary lovers from more innocent and beautiful days gone by.

Yes, love, or a facsimile thereof, is always the answer. The Pinoy audience will find ultimate consolation through short-cut processes of escape, blurring the illusion created by media and hoping that this would translate to reality.

This is the only explanation why not only sympathy but fanatic empathy is invested by die-hards in wanting the TV/movie love team to be truly, honestly and really in love even without the stare and glare of cameras. The nagging question perennially asked is, "*Sila na ba talaga? Magkakatuluyan kaya sila?*" as if the consummation of this tandem's relationship will lower the dollar-peso rate of exchange, dismantle North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and insure the fulfillment of a "strong republic."

Forced role-playing

Because of the emotional investment awarded not only by fans but by the consumer/public, the dreadful obligation to push the love team beyond the video or celluloid realm becomes compulsory. It can never be enough that the members of the blessed pair are in love in the movies or their bread-and-butter TV shows; they must also be in love outside the set, press conference or pictorials.

More often than not, whether it is because they are always thrown into each other's arms for almost 24 hours a day, forced to go into a mode of role-playing like they share everything, including the oxygen in their lungs, as long as someone is looking, love-teams do end up with each other. In other words, they begin to believe their own press release.

The moment the illusion is shattered and the fans are pained by the dissolution of this much-invested romance, that is when careers crash

This is where real success (translated as frenzy and therefore box-office hits) takes place and curiosity reaches fever pitch. Every show biz publication, talk show and enthusiast would want to know anything "Sweet *ba talaga sila?*") but everything ("*Sa tingin mo, nag*-do *na kaya sila*?") about every millisecond in the life of the couple. Every quarrel, private or public, is good enough material for special features, interviews and comments of TV hosts, columnists and, occasionally, the parish priest.

Image is substance

But when the love team crashes, when by some cruel twist of fate the relationship is jeopardized either by emotional instability or simply mutual fatigue, that is also when the real trouble begins. Pity the love team that is undergoing major relationship crises at a time when their latest movie is just about to hit the screens.

In media, the image is the substance. What the public is made to perceive is what is real. Although what is shown may not be necessarily true, it does not really matter. After all, we are playing with reality sugarcoated as dreams.

In the business of making and selling wish fulfillment, the real score plays a role far inferior to the marketing ploy necessary to sell the multi-million peso products. After all, the love team is as much manufactured as the movies and TV shows they star in. Their personal lives become as much a capital investment as the startling amounts plunked in by the studio for their showcase.

Queen survives

Thus, even in their most tumultuous moments, boy and girl are coerced, coached and even forced to behave in a manner to keep the public titillated enough to go out and spend a few bucks to watch their movie. They will be seen holding hands, exchanging syrupy expressions with goo-goo eyes, pinching each other's sides and professing words of love enough to make Elizabeth Barrett Browning turn in her grave.

The moment the illusion is shattered and the fans are pained by the dissolution of this much-invested romance, that is when the

EVERYBODY / C7

Manila vows 'bigger, better' film festival in June

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS
Leah Salterio

JUNE 24 is "Araw ng Maynila," to be highlighted by the annual Manila Film Festival which Mayor **Lito Atienza** describes as "bigger and better" this year.

It's all systems go, according to Atienza, for this year's filmfest.

Like last year, the six districts of Manila will adopt the six official film entries, which will hold promotional activities in the districts to be hosted by their respective councilors.

Councilor **Marjun Isidro** of District 1 will host Jaggs' Productions' "Huling Birhen sa Lupa," starring **Ara Mina, Maui Taylor** and **Jay Manalo**, directed by **Joel Lamangan**.

Councilor **Marlon Lacson** of District 2 will adopt RP Bros. Production's "Alab ng Lahi," which topbills **Robin Padilla, Eddie Garcia** and **Jacky Woo**, directed by **Ricardo "Bebong" Osorio**.

District 3 Councilor **Miles Roces** will help promote Viva Films' "Pangarap Ko ang Ibigin Ka," starring **Christopher de Leon, Regine Velasquez** and **Dingdong Dantes**, directed by **Louie Ignacio**.

District 4 Councilor **Trisha Bonoan-David** will host Premiere Productions' "Operation Balikatan," with Eddie Garcia, **Rey Malonzo, Mounsour del Rosario** and **Patricia Javier**, directed by **Cirio Santiago**.

District 5 Councilor **Kim Atienza** will work with MaQ Productions' "Sanib," starring **Aubrey Miles, Carlo Muñoz** and **Raymond Bagatsing**, directed by **Celso Ad. Castillo**.

District 6 will be the host of Imus Productions' "Vertud ng Putik," starring **Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr.**, directed by **Augusto Salvador**.

"Everybody has been doing his share in the preparations, from the producers of the entries to the theater owners and the technical people who will work on the awards night," Atienza said.

Last year's filmfest broke records in terms of earnings. Its entries featured the likes of **Sharon Cuneta, Joyce Jimenez, Rudy Fernandez** and **Judy Ann Santos**.

"It was the highest-earning filmfest, with a P30-million gross," Atienza said. "With this year's lineup, we are confident that the filmfest will earn more."

This year's awards night will be on June 19 at the Aliw Theater in the Star City complex.

June 9 will see the stars in a grand motorcade along Roxas Boulevard. The following day, June 10, all six entries will premiere at SM Manila Cinemas.

The festival will run from June 11 to 24 in all Manila theaters; June 11 to 17 in theaters nationwide.

A pre-festival "Flores de Mayo," to be participated in by the stars of the film entries, will be held on May 30 along the stretch of Quirino Avenue, from Roxas Boulevard to Nagtahan.

Regine's reign

REGINE Velasquez has never had it so good. She reigns on TV, in concerts and in the movies.

NO INTRIGUES necessary to keep Regine Velasquez on top.

She is one star who doesn't need to resort to intrigues or controversies to keep her popularity.

She can do a concert with **Janno Gibbs, Martin Nievera** or even with her ex-flame, **Ariel Rivera**, and the audience will lap it up.

She has made movies with top leading men such as Christopher de Leon, **Aga Muhlach, Richard Gomez** and Robin Padilla, but she was never linked with any of them.

"No gossip, we just focus on the team-up," she says. "In the first place, for the movie to make money, people should believe in the team-up, not in any controversy."

Regine maintains she doesn't say no to be paired with a particular leading man in the movies. She is even willing to make a movie with her ex-boyfriend Ariel Rivera if there is an offer.

"There are very few leading man in local movies, so there's no need to refuse," she says.

Regine has just finished a sold-out, two-night concert with Martin at the Araneta Coliseum, which will have a repeat on June 14. Prior to the Big Dome show, she and Martin did a successful, well-received, five-city concert tour in the US.

In September, Regine will reunite with Ariel, but only onstage, when they hold a concert at the Folk Arts Theater.

"Ariel and I are okay now," Regine offers. "We didn't talk for a long time after our break up because I was mad, but I didn't show it. It wasn't as big as the way it was written."

Regine is now in good terms even with Ariel's wife, **Gelli de Belen**. Early this year, Regine agreed to be interviewed by Gelli in the latter's morning talk show, "Sis," on GMA 7.

"At least now I can walk around GMA 7 without the fear that I might bump into her," Regine says. "*Okay na kami ni Gelli*. One time we saw each other in 'Eat Bulaga' and she was very courteous. She even said 'hi' to me."

In the movies, Regine teams up again with her "Wanted: Perfect Mother" costar Boyet de Leon for the Manila Film Festival entry, "Pangarap Ko ang Ibigin Ka."

"I was a nobody when I did 'Wanted: Perfect Mother' with him and he agreed to be paired with me, that's why I was so grateful to him," Regine says of Boyet.

Star Cinema has offered to do a movie with Regine and **Piolo**. Viva Films will also pair her again with Richard Gomez–her leading man in "Ikaw Lamang, Hanggang Ngayon"–in "Bisperas ng Mayo," a musical on the Philippine revolution based on **Nick Joaquin**'s "May Day Eve."

Regine finds it unbelievable that she was the personal choice of "Bisperas ng Mayo" director **Joel Lamangan** for the project.

In "Pangarap Ko ang Ibigin Ka," Regine plays a painter who falls in love at first sight with Boyet when she sees him in church delivering a eulogy for his wife. She finds ways to meet him, to the point of stalking him, with the intention of making him fall in love with her.

Starring with them are Dingdong Dantes, **William Martinez, Lara Fabregas, John Lapuz, Marissa Delgado, Rosemarie Gil, Shintaro Valdez, Rudy Francisco** and **Noel Trinidad**.

Regine also sings the theme of "Pangarap Ko ang Ibigin Ka," composed by **Ogie Alcasid**. The movie soundtrack contains other cuts like "Harana," "Hinahanap-hanap Kita" and "Can't Take My Eyes Off You."

Gary in Chicago

SUCCESSFUL CONCERT TOUR. Gary Valenciano conquers the United States anew.

GARY Valenciano had a very successful concert at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts in Chicago Wednesday night. It was the "best concert in Chicago," Gary's wife, **Angeli Pangilinan-Valenciano**, said in a text message.

Gary performed before a sold-out crowd. They had to turn away more than 500 fans at the gate, said Angeli.

Gary's mom, **Grimilda Santiago-Ortiz**, who is based in Florida, was there and sang a duet with him, "Historia de un Amor," which they also recorded in Gary's "One 2 One" album.

Gary and his son **Gabriel** danced onstage. Daughter **Kiana** is also with them in the US tour.

Angeli said concert promoter **Danny Tinimbang** had been getting congratulatory calls after the Chicago show.

Gary flew to Nashville, Tennessee for a show at the Acuff Theater Friday night. Saturday, he did a show at the Tropicana Showroom in Atlantic City, New Jersey.

On May 25, Gary will be at the Nob Hill Masonic Center in San Francisco.

He will also be a guest in the Entrepreneurs Convention Awards on May 23 in San Diego, California, an event to be covered by mainstream international media.

Before leaving Manila, Gary released an album of movie themes, "Gary at the Movies" from Universal Records, as part of his 20th anniversary celebration.

The album's carrier single is "Kailangan Kita," which Gary recorded for the Aga Muhlach-**Claudine Barretto** blockbuster starrer of the same title, directed by **Rory Quintos**.

It also includes "Sana Maulit Muli," from the movie which starred Aga and **Lea Salonga** and which was filmed entirely in the US; a new version of "Ibulong Mo sa Diyos" with **Kyla**, the theme of Gary's movie with **Vilma Santos**; "Sa Tuwing Naaalala," from his movie, "Kaputol ng Isang Awit," with Sharon Cuneta; Gary's personal favorite, "Ang Aking Munting Bituin," from **Maryo J. de los Reyes**' "Magnifico;" Gary's version of the **Freddie Aguilar** classic, "Anak," from the Vilma Santos and Claudine Barretto starrer.

Other tracks are "Ako't Ikaw," from the soundtrack of the 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival best picture, "Mano Po;" "Natutulog Ba ang Diyos?," "I Will Be Here" from "Nine Mornings" (with Piolo Pascual and **Donita Rose**), "Reaching Out," "Eto na Naman" from "Rock-a-Bye Baby, Tatlo ang Daddy," and a radio mix of "Hataw Na" from Gary's starrer with former Miss Universe **Dayanara Torres**.

Nicole vs Penelope in Cannes

KIDMAN

CRUZ

CANNES, France—Penelope Cruz took to the red carpet on Wednesday in the battle to be Queen of Cannes and faced some tough comparisons with Hollywood darling Nicole Kidman.

Cruz, star of the rollicking 18th century drama that opened the 56th Cannes Film Festival, had to fend off questions from the press over the "fluffiness" of her roles, planets away from those of Kidman, Oscar-winning former wife of Cruz's partner Tom Cruise.

She was also quizzed about the conspicuous absence of Cruise, who had been widely expected to accompany her to her latest film premiere.

When asked repeatedly by reporters why he was not there, Cruz smiled coyly and said he had stayed away "to work."

Mudslingers were hoping for a "Duel on the Croisette" -- as one tabloid headline put it -- as the alabaster Australian ex-wife met dusky Spanish girlfriend. But Cruz will be long gone before Kidman arrives to flag her new film, "Dogville."

The battle will still be played out in the media, which has swung behind the divorced Kidman as she has soared from a B-list actress known best for being Mrs. Cruise to a master of demanding and gritty roles.

Cruz, inevitably cast in saccharine roles on the international stage due to her looks and beguiling Spanish accent, describes her character in Cannes opener "Fanfan la Tulipe" as "a romantic" who just "wants to fall in love."

"I felt it was a really good character for me," Cruz, sporting a new bobbed haircut and a Chanel jacket, told reporters. "I fell in love with this movie. It had a lot of energy."

"Dogville," directed by the iconoclastic Lars von Trier and filmed in a lugubrious set empty of decor, is slated to be the most radical film to hit Cannes this year. Kidman says she was "psychologically stripped naked" during filming.

Unlike Kidman, Cruz will be safe from jury scrutiny in Cannes, with the swashbuckling "Fanfan la Tulipe" shown out of competition as a lighthearted romp to start off the festival.

But critics are eager for her to show some punch.

Cruz plays an inmate in a mental institution in a dark new film called "Gothika," but only in a supporting role.

"I don't look at roles in terms of how many minutes they last, but in terms of whether they will help me learn," she said. "I want to be free to choose material and take risks."

Kidman, who has long shed her image as just a pretty face on Cruise's arm, is snowed under with offers, including plans to make two more films with Denmark's Von Trier.

In other developments in Cannes, what was probably the biggest and most select of the bashes held during the annual film festival has been cancelled.

The May 18 party at the Eden Roc, sponsored by Swiss jewellers De Grisogono, was scrapped "due to the many cancellations by stars unwilling to travel due to the current international and health context," the organizers said.

Salma Hayek, star and producer of "Frida," who was to have been the star guest of the party, notably decided at the last minute not to travel to Cannes.

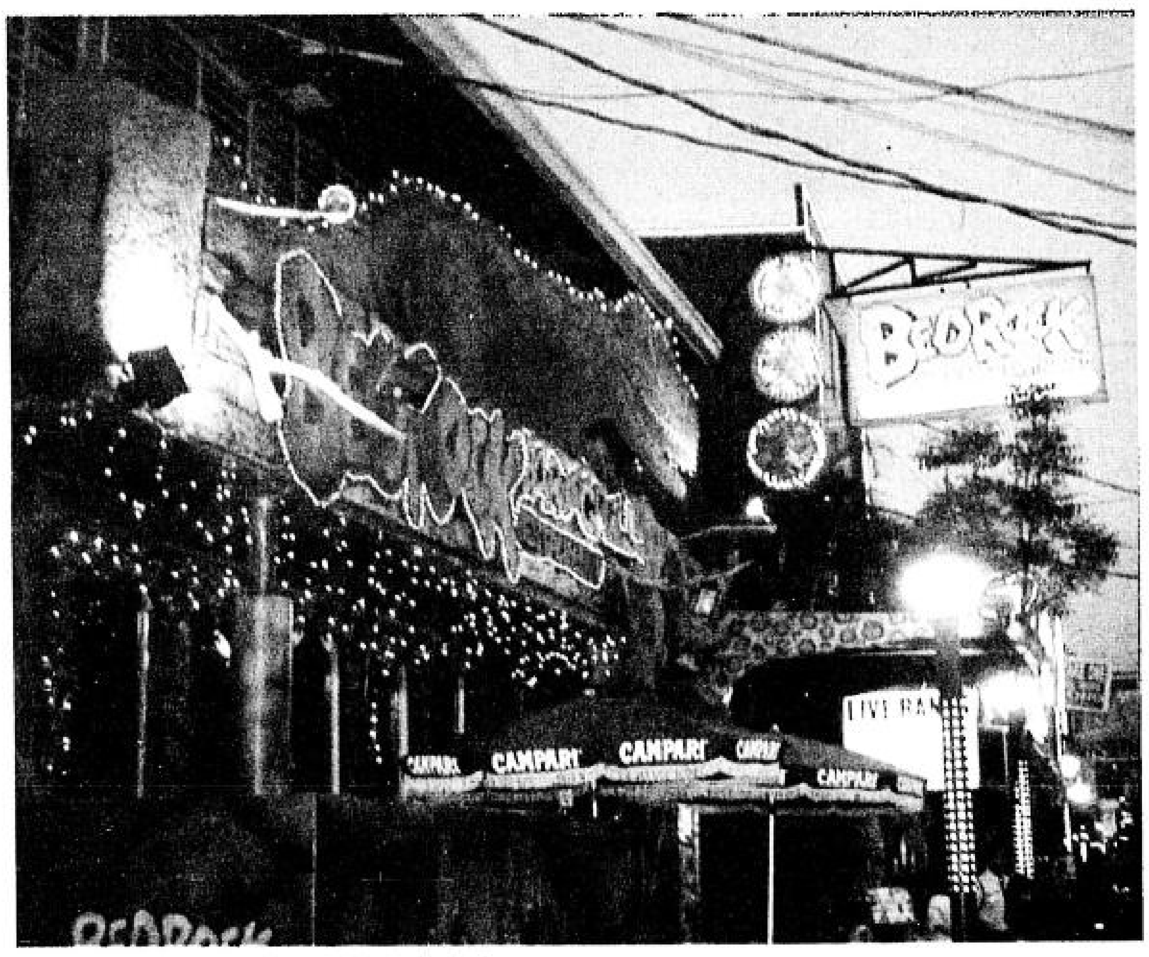
Meg Ryan, who is on the nine-member jury that will decide who wins the Cannes film festival's Palme d'Or, said her first trip to the Riviera city was as a backpacker.

The 41-year-old US actress told a news conference that she had two dollars in hand and slept on the beach.

Reuters, AFP

Where every night is a weekend night

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes



PARTY PLACE. Bedrock on Adriatico in Malate.

FOR cartoon lovers, Bedrock is the place where the primeval Flinstones family lives. For regular Malate bar-hoppers, however, it is so much more than that.

Bedrock on Adriatico Street in the heart of Malate is certainly not for lovers of the famous cartoon family. Bedrock is a bar that features live show bands each day of the week, including Holy Thursday and Good Friday. Yes, this bar never closes!

It also claims to be the only place where everyday is a weekend.

Why name a bar after a famous cartoon setting when bars obviously do not have anything to do with kids?

Bedrock's manager, Mok Olarte, said they took the concept of their bar from the cartoon Flinstones not because they wanted to appeal to kids but because they wanted to use a name that implies a happy and fun spot. "That's why we chose the name Bedrock, not Flinstones," Olarte explained.

Indeed, the Adriatico place looks like an abandoned cave that has been converted into a party venue. Unlike most bars that use futuristic glass and metal furniture and fixtures, Bedrock sticks to heavy wooden chairs and tables. The chair cushion covers are in very Flinstones-like animal prints. Consistent with the theme were the restroom door handles that are made of varnished tree branches instead of the usual metal doorknobs.

Asked what else makes Bedrock different from other Malate bars, Olarte replied, "We are among the few (in Malate) that do not charge entrance fees. It's one way of making your customers feel welcome."

While acoustic music is the trend these days, Bedrock has not jumped on the the bandwagon and prefers to stick to mostly dance music.

Olarte does not deny that noise is part of Bedrock's ambiance. In fact, that very same trait got the Bedrock branch in Makati into trouble early this year. Bel-Air residents had clamored for the closing down of Bedrock on Jupiter Street because the music was too loud. Not wanting to compromise their brand of music, Bedrock management decided to leave the place.

SHOW TIME

"For now, we are concentrating on our main branch," said Olarte, also citing the slump in the economy.

Bedrock, however, does not seem to feel the effects of the economic crisis. While many establishments continue to open and then close down in Malate, Bedrock has managed to stay in the business for three years now.

SHOW BAND on the Bedrock stage.

Bedrock is celebrating its third anniversary today with show bands like Civil Eyes, MMC, the Boss Band, Rest of the Boys and Nexxus.

Designers Boying Eustaquio, Genevieve Gozum and Y.R.Y.S. will show their summer and evening wear creations in the first Bedrock Stone Age Bikini and Fashion Show tomorrow.

Those who want to have fun and join the party may call Bedrock at 522-7279 or 522-7280 for inquiries and reservations.

IMEE TELLS STORIES AT ENCHANTED KINGDOM
Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos delighted young and old alike when she was one of the celebrity storytellers at Enchanted Kingdom. The lawmaker enthralled children from the House of Refuge Foundation. This month, the celebrity storytellers are Cherry Pie Picache (May 25) and Janice de Belen (May 31).

Zsa Zsa sings Crossover hits at the Captain's Bar

IT HAS been more than a decade since Zsa Zsa Padilla had her first taste of the show biz spotlight as vocalist of the '80s band Hotdog. She was spotted by first-rate TV and stage director Johnny Manahan to guest in a concert and soon after, offers to record albums came her way.

Her unforgettable hits like George Canseco's "Hiram" and Willy Cruz's "Kahit Na" have become anthems for many hopeless romantics. She has also proven her mettle in acting, by giving life to complex and interesting characters on TV and the movies.

On May 29, Zsa Zsa will take centerstage at Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental Manila for a rare, one-night engagement.

It will be an intimate evening of good music as she renders not only her hits, but also a lot of sentimental favorites.

Joining Zsa Zsa onstage are vocal group Aperitif and some of Manila's top musicians. Show starts 8 p.m.

The concert is produced by 105.1 Crossover. For ticket inquiries, call Crossover office at 712-9755 or 712-9764, Ticket World at 891-5610 or Captain's Bar at 750-8888.

Begging for trouble

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHEN Channel 7's "Magpakailanman" moved its time slot to compete directly with Channel 2's long-running "Maalaala Mo Mo Kaya," it scored a major coup with its dramatizations of celebrities' life experiences and conflicts. The innovation clicked so well with viewers that "Maalaala" was compelled to also feature stars' real-life issues.

After a few such reality-based dramas, however, some negative repercussions have been felt. When he was depicted in a bad light in an episode on **AiAi delas Alas**' unhappy love life, Ai Ai's former partner protested.

And **Klaudia Koronel**'s father did the same when he was portrayed as a pedophile in an episode revolving around her dismal childhood and teenage years.

It's clear, therefore, that reality-based dramas, particularly when they pertain to celebrities and their families and friends, are practically begging for trouble. The shows have to tread carefully or protect themselves legally to avoid being sued for misrepresentation, defamation or character assassination

Reality-based shows abroad do this by securing written authorizations from the people they depict, or by altering facts or names to fudge the attribution of their diatribes.

Their local counterparts should look into these and other safeguard mechanisms to keep themselves litigation-free. Otherwise, "reality" could turn around and bite them in the seat of their pants–where it could really hurt!

Welcome back, Ronnie

FOR YEARS now, we've enjoyed watching the action films directed and starred in by **Ronnie Ricketts**. They're lighter, brighter and smarter than the usual heavy-handed and formula-oriented action flicks, and Ronnie's comic touch is agreeably breezy and with-it.

Unfortunately, Ronnie hasn't made an action movie in a number of film seasons, due to the slump in production experienced by the movie industry as a whole, and by the action film genre in particular.

That's why we're especially happy to hear that actor-director Ronnie Ricketts is firmly back in business this month, with the release of his new actioner, "Dayo," where he co-stars with **Regine Tolentino**.

"Dayo" is set in the future, after World War III. Ronnie plays a survivor who looks for his family in the ruins of war. **Angelica Panganiban** is cast as his younger sister. Other cast members include **Jeffrey Santos**, **Manjo del Mundo**, **Glenda Garcia** and **Mandy Ochoa**.

We hope "Dayo" clicks with action film fans, so Ronnie Ricketts can return to filmmaking on a permanent basis.

Movies on TV

ON HBO: Monday, May 19, at 11:45 a.m., "In the Name of the Father"; 11:15 p.m., "The Grinch." Tuesday, May 20, at 6:30 a.m., "Little Women"; 12 noon, "The Tailor of Panama"; 2 p.m., "Sister Mary Explains It All"; 7 p.m., "Mary Shelly's Frankenstein."

Wednesday, May 21, at 11 p.m., "Proof of Life." Thursday, May 22, at 2 p.m., "Meet the Parents"; 4 p.m., "National Lampoon's European Vacation"; 9 p.m., "A. I. - Artificial Intelligence."

On the Cinemax channel: Monday, May 19, at 12 noon, "Tequila Sunrise"; 2 p.m., "Cinema Secrets: Destructive Forces."

Tuesday, May 20, at 5:45 p.m., "Mad About Mambo." Wednesday, May 21, at 10 a.m., "Lawrence of Arabia" (restored version); 5:30 p.m., "The Milagro Beanfield War."

Thursday, May 22, at 6:30 a.m., "McHale's Navy"; 7 p.m., "Boys on the Side"; 9 p.m., "The Eiger Sanction"; 2:15 a.m., "What Makes a Family"; 4 a.m., "Cinema Secrets: Oscar-winning FX."

'25th Hour'

SPIKE LEE directs **Edward Norton** in "25th Hour," an intense street drama in which Norton plays a drug dealer whose luck has just run out. He has only 24 hours left before he goes to prison, and he uses his remaining hours as a free man to go back to his Iris Catholic roots and the people who matter the most to him.

The acclaimed actor was drawn to the complexity of the film's material: It's about the consequences of moral passivity, a hard look at whether or not you've drifted off into some gray areas, ethically speaking," Norton observes.

But the project's strongest draw as far as he was concerned was the opportunity it gave him to be directed by Spike Lee, one of the directors he's admired the most for years. And the experience was as memorable as he had hoped it would be!

'High Time'

ON MAY 24, **Dingdong Avanzado** marks his 16th year in show business with a concert, "High Time," at Music Museum. **Ogie Alcasid** and **Kyla** are his musical guests.

Dingdong has a lot to be grateful for: He and his wife **Jessa Zaragoza** have their new baby, **Jayda**, his latest album "Here to Stay" is doing well, and its carrier single, "Walang Kapalit," is the theme song of **Sharon Cuneta** and **Richard Gomez**'s current starrer. For tickets to "High Time," call 891-5610.

Marissa Sanchez loses weight, gains self-esteem

By Marinel R. Cruz

SINGER-COMEDIENNE Marissa Sanchez is bent on bringing down her weight to 130 pounds, from 200 pounds, and not just for aesthetic reasons. Early last year, doctors said she has diabetes and advised her to go on a diet.

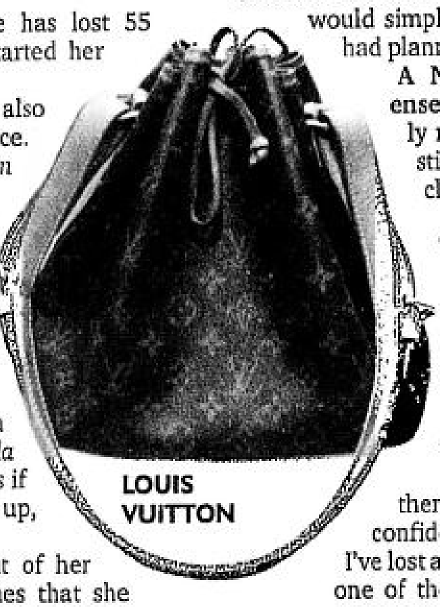
When she consulted a gynecologist about her plan to have a baby with Ian Nava, her boyfriend of two years, the gynecologist gave her the same advice: Lose weight.

"You can't imagine how tough it was the first time I tried to lose weight," Marissa says. "It drove me crazy."

Today, she claims she has lost 55 pounds since she first started her low-carbohydrate diet.

The diet, she says, also boosted her confidence. "Sexy *na ang tingin sa akin ni* Ian *ngayon*," she jokes. "Soon, I'll be able to work as a ramp model."

Marissa confesses she feels most insecure about her weight when she goes shopping. "This happens every time a saleslady tells me, '*wala pong kasya sa inyo*.' It's as if she's telling me to wake up, to get real."



Marissa has taken out of her closet most of the clothes that she does not use anymore, like the 36-inch Levi's jeans she proudly shows INQUIRER Entertainment in her house in Sampaloc, Manila.

"Believe it or not, I'm now a size-28," she brags. She even brings out a tape measure to prove it.

She says she no longer wears unflattering sun dresses, which she describes as "*pang-nanay na* duster." She says she now wears skimpy negligees and sexy panties in bed, to make her feel even sexier. She has kept these in her drawers all these years, along with a size-7 denim skirt that Ian bought for her by mistake.

"I didn't think the skirt was for me because it was way too small to fit me," she recalls. "Now it's even loose!"

Although she is now filling up her closet with new, sexy and body-hugging outfits, she still wants to keep most of her old clothes, "if only to remind me of how big I was and to motivate me to continue with my diet."

OUT OF THE CLOSET

Most memorable rubber shoes. "The red Nike ones that Ian bought me. It's funny because I was with him when he bought this, and he gave me the change. The saleslady thought I had given Ian money so he could buy me a gift."

Favorite blouse. "This two-piece pink chiffon blouse is very memorable because I was wearing this on my first night with Ian (laughs). He took me out on a date at the Hotel Inter-Continental in Makati. I thought we would simply go there to talk, but he had planned something else."

A Noli Santiago two-piece ensemble. "I had this especially made because when I was still really big, no RTW clothes could fit me."

Favorite evening gown. "The one made by Edward Teng. I wore this on the day my comic character 'Chenelyn' first appeared on 'Sis.' *Maraming humanga diyan.* I wore T-back panties under its see-through skirt."

Negligees. "I love to wear them now because I'm more confident. I feel sexy now that I've lost a lot of weight. I feel as if I'm one of the actresses on 'Baywatch.' *Kahit nakahubad ako maganda pa rin ako tingnan, 'di ba?.*"

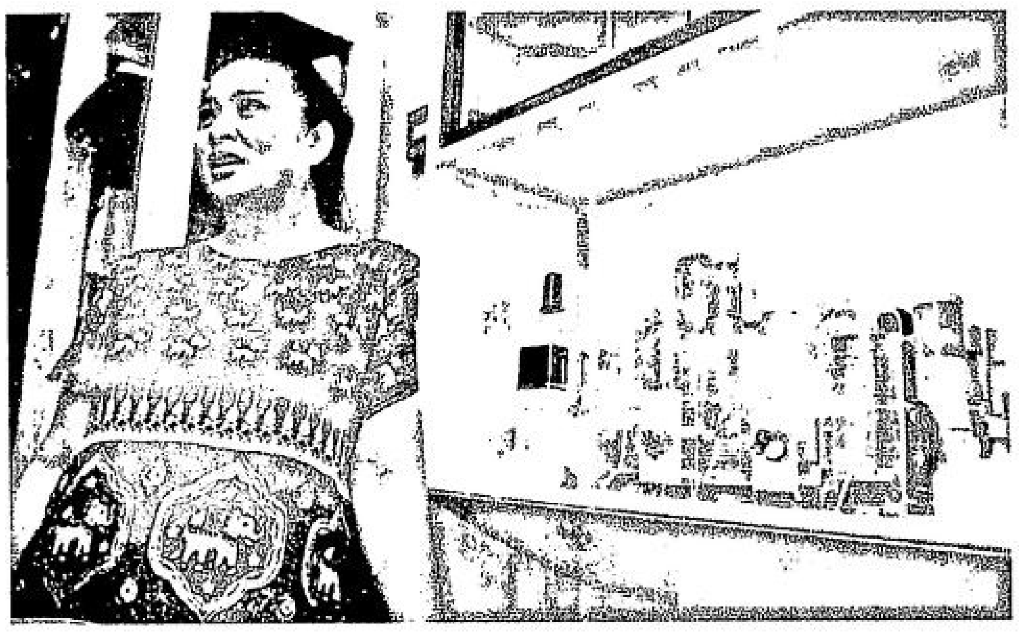
Favorite perfume. "It has got to be this new scent from Tova Nights, because it smells soft, delicious and very feminine."

DKNY. "This is Ian's favorite perfume on me.

Favorite high-heeled shoes. "I love wearing this two-year-old pair of black strappy sandals whenever I have a singing engagement."

Favorite flat shoes. "The red sandals that I wore when I hosted the CineManila Film Festival awards show last August."

Extra-large sun dresses or dusters. "They remind me of the times I got depressed whenever I looked at myself in the mirror. *Ang laki talaga ng mga braso ko!*"



OVER, SIDEWAYS and under, Marissa's closets now seem filled with things for a new woman, including sexy undies, scents and shoes.

Thong. "Ian me gave this white thong as a present. I couldn't wear this then because I was too fat. Now I can wear it, with the T-line in front (laughs)."

Pant suit. "I wore this at the 2002 Aliw awards (where she won the best female performer trophy). *Pinintas-pintasan ako sa* 'Star Talk.' But despite what the magazine show said, I don't find it *baduy*. Okay *naman siya, 'di ba?*"

White T-shirts. "I've always felt comfortable wearing plain white shirts with jeans. *Parang magra*-rally. I used to wear extra large white shirts. Now I wear large or medium."

Favorite skirt. "Ian bought this denim Clio skirt in the States. It was too small for me. But since it's a souvenir from his US trip, I decided to keep it. You know what? *Maluwag siya sa akin ngayon!*"

Jogging pants. "I love to play badminton that's why I have a collection of jogging pants but I particularly love this green pair from Addidas because of its polyester fabric. Perspiration doesn't dry up easily on cotton."

Jeans. "I bought this pair from Kamiseta. It's a size-27. When you say Kamiseta, *bawal ang mataba doon*. This is the largest pair of pants sold in Kamiseta, and it fits me!"

Blouse. "This is my favorite blouse from Kamiseta. I feel sexy whenever I wear this. *Nagmamadali palagi umuwi si* Ian (laughs)."

Bras. "I used to buy bras in Quiapo for P80, but now I wear Marks and Spencer. *Ang taray, 'di ba?* I realized that they really feel comfortable and are more reliable than cheap bras."

Bag. "Ian gave me a Louis Vuitton drawstring bag last May 1. We had just celebrated our second anniversary. The the first time I had an original Louis Vuitton, it was second-hand. But mind you, a second-hand Louis Vuitton is still expensive."

Button-down dress. "Dulce gave me this after we did a show together. *Pamana sa akin ng isang* world-class singer '*yan*."

OLD AND NEW mix in Marissa's space.

Hair Asia brings show on the road in three provinces

MANILA, San Fernando, Pampanga as well as Davao and Cebu will witness a new kind of show—a combination of entertainment and education—as Hair Asia brings "The Art of Hairdressing" on the road.

Fanny Serrano will co-host the entire road-show tour, together with the Hair Asia artistic team, while the seven hunks of the Masculados will perform to entertain the crowds in San Fernando, Pampanga and in Manila.

"The Art of Hairdressing" culminates on June 2 at the World Trade Center along Roxas Boulevard.

Beauty impresario Evelyn Alvaran-Cruz of Hair Asia, together with Kolours Premium Coloring Creme, take the latest hairdressing techniques to the Bren Guiao Sports Complex in San Fernando, Pampanga on May 22, the Royal Mandaya Hotel in Davao City on May 26, and the Grand Majestic Convention Center in Cebu City on May 28.

Launched in cooperation with Splash Manufacturing Corp., maker of Kolours Premium Colouring Creme, "The Art of Hairdressing" features a hands-on workshop and seminar on hair-coloring, cutting and hairstyling using Splash Styling Aids, Keratin Emulsion and Persona Aromatherapy.

A well-known international stylist will do live demonstrations of current hair trends and techniques, according to Cruz.

"Stylists are always eager to improve and professionalize their skills, but many of them have to come to Manila to learn new techniques," says Cruz, who also notes a heavy turnout of competitors from the provinces in her two Hair Asia events, the National Open Championship for Hairstyling and Makeup, and Salon Spectacular's Battle of the Champs.

"We decided to bring the knowledge to the provinces through 'The Art of Hairdressing,'" she says.

Cruz recalls with amusement how, while on the road for an out-of-town outreach program, she spotted makeshift beauty parlors "in the barrios and the *bundok*!"

"We Filipinos are vain by nature," she says. "You can't take grooming from us. So even during an economic crisis, the beauty industry booms even more because people want to unwind, relax and feel good."

Cruz's intimate understanding of the beauty industry stems from her experience as both a salon patron and practitioner. In and out of the parlor for manicure, pedicure and perm all before the age of 10, she worked briefly as a makeup artist for brides.

She proved more effective, however, as an entrepreneur. In the '80s, she and childhood friend Biba Varona opened Biba Salon on Pasay Road in Makati, which became the hottest place for celebrities and socialites looking for cutting-edge styles and salon services.

In the '90s, Cruz started publishing the Hair Asia beauty journal. A year later, the name became synonymous with splashy live events such as the well-attended National Open Championship for Hairstyling and Makeup, and Salon Spectacular.

For more information regarding "The Art of Hairdressing," visit Hair Asia at 35 Judge Jimenez St., Kamuning, Quezon City; call 415-7988 or 926-9480; e-mail *hairasia@hotmail.com*; or text 0917-8122692 or 0917-9172897.

PIOLO PASCUAL joins other models in Hair Asia's latest event last March.

ALVARAN-CRUZ

ALL DIGITAL SOUND

AYALA CINEMAS

PRESENTS

G1 GLORIETTA 1

1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
3 X-MEN 2
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

G4 GLORIETTA 4

THE MATRIX RELOADED
THE MATRIX RELOADED
THX GUARANTEED SEATS THE MATRIX RELOADED 11:00 1:50 4:40 7:30 10:20
4 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
THE MATRIX RELOADED
6 X-MEN 2
7 WALANG KAPALIT

GB1 GREENBELT 1

ArtFilm
1 THE MATRIX RELOADED 11:55, 2:45, 5:35, 8:25
2 THE MATRIX RELOADED 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00

Onstage
ACOUSTIC NIGHT OUT FEAT. SIDE A
May 16, 17, 30 & 31

GB3 GREENBELT 3

THX GUARANTEED SEATS 1 THE MATRIX RELOADED 2:05 5:00 7:55 10:50
THX GUARANTEED SEATS 2 THE MATRIX RELOADED 12:20 3:15
GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE HOURS 12:15 2:30 4:45 7:00 9:15 11:30
GUARANTEED SEATS 4 THE MATRIX RELOADED 2:40 5:35 8:30 11:25
GUARANTEED SEATS 5 THE MATRIX RELOADED [illegible]

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2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 X-MEN 2
5 WALANG KAPALIT

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3 BAYARAN
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9 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR

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3 XEREX
4 RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA

tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR
3
4 WALANG KAPALIT
5 X-MEN 2

FRC Cinema

(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1
2

Berma Cinema

(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 - 879.2029

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242 8400

1 TILL THERE WAS YOU
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 (DOLBY DIGITAL) X-MEN 2
4 (SDDS) THE MATRIX RELOADED
5 (DTS) THE MATRIX RELOADED
6 THE HOURS
7 KIKAY

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS

tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242 8400

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall

(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
TEL. (049) 837-0926

1 PUNLA
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 (DTS) THE MATRIX RELOADED

Cinema 2000 Waltermart

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 TILL THERE WAS YOU
2 (DTS) WALANG KAPALIT
3 (DOLBY) THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall

(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 (DOLBY) BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
3 (DTS) THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 TILL THERE WAS YOU

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix

(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 ANGER MANAGEMENT
2 TILL THERE WAS YOU
3 (DTS) X- MEN-2
4

Cinema 2000 MetroTown

(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 TILL THERE WAS YOU
3 (DOLBY) JOHNNY ENGLISH
4 (DTS) THE MATRIX RELOADED

Magic Star Cinema

(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 (DOLBY) THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 (DTS) TILL THERE WAS YOU
3 WALANG KAPALIT

Lianas Cinema

(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) BAYARAN
2 AMBISYON
3 (DTS) WALANG KAPALIT
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

Lianas MovieCity

(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 (DTS) X-MEN-2
4 PUNLA
5 SOUL KEEPER

Olivarez Tri-Cinema

(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALNG KAPALIT
3 PUNLA

Olivarez Los Baños

tel (049) 249.2558

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 PUNLA

Mega Center Mall

(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 X-MEN-2
2 TILL THERE WAS YOU
3 (DTS) WALANG KAPALIT
4 (DOLBY) THE MATRIX RELOADED

Cabuyao

(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS)
2 (DTS)

Emperor

(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 XEREX
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall

(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 X-MEN-2
3 TILL THERE WAS YOU
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

Jade Cinema

(Angeles City) tel (045)887-5001 TO 03

1 (DOLBY EX) THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 (SDDS) THE MATRIX RELOADED
CONFESSION OF A DANGEROUS MIND

Cine Nepo Mall

(Angeles City) te (045) 887-0121

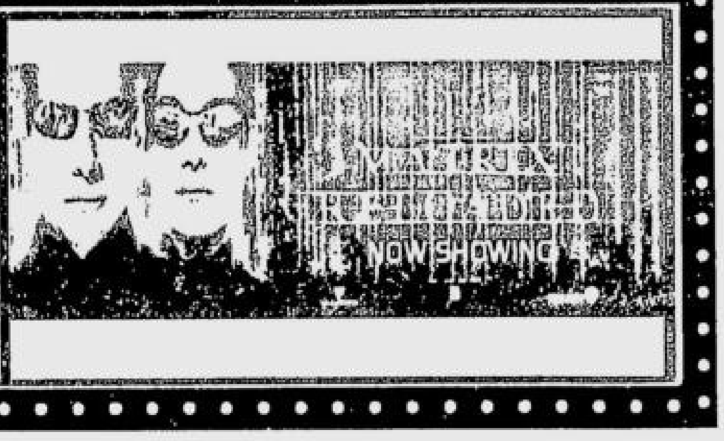
1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
CONFESSION OF A DANGEROUS MIND
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang

Tel. 85035-71 to 72



SM CINEMA

SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999

NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR

4173868

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 TILL THERE WAS YOU
5 THE MATRIX RELOADED
6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 KIKAY
8 X-MEN 2

SM CENTERPOINT

7149522 -7161416

1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 THE HOURS
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 KIKAY
5 THE MATRIX RELOADED
6 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR
7 THE MATRIX RELOADED
8 TILL THERE WAS YOU
9 X-MEN 2
10 WALANG KAPALIT

SM CITY FAIRVIEW

9350749

1 KIKAY
2 JOHNNY ENGLISH
3 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED
5 X-MEN 2
6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 THE MATRIX RELOADED
8 TILL THERE WAS YOU
9 WALANG KAPALIT
10 THE HOURS
11 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
12 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM CITY MANILA

5239240

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 X-MEN 2
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED
5 THE HOURS
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED
7 KIKAY
8 XEREX
9 WALANG KAPALIT
10 JOHNNY ENGLISH
11 TILL THERE WAS YOU
12 WALANG KAPALIT

SM MEGAMALL

6331901 • 6329401

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 X-MEN 2
3 BRINGING DOWN THE HOUSE
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED
5 THE MATRIX RELOADED
6 THE HOURS
7 KIKAY
8 WALANG KAPALIT
9 WALANG KAPALIT
10 THE MATRIX RELOADED
11 TILL THERE WAS YOU
12 XEREX

SM CITY NORTH EDSA

9295452

1 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR
2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
3 THE HOURS
4 TILL THERE WAS YOU
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED
7 X-MEN 2
8 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM SOUTHMALL

8005888

1 THE HOURS
2 X-MEN 2
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 WALANG KAPALIT
5 KIKAY
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED
7 WALANG KAPALIT
8 THE MATRIX RELOADED
9 TILL THERE WAS YOU
10 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR

SM CITY CEBU

2313876

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 X-MEN 2
3 VIRGIN PEOPLE 3
4 JUNGLE BOOK 2
5 TILL THERE WAS YOU
6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 WALANG KAPALIT
8 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM CITY ILOILO

3209422

1 JUNGLE BOOK 2
2 CLOSED
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 WALANG KAPALIT
5 X-MEN 2
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED
7 CLOSED
8 RING 2

SM CITY PAMPANGA

7128015

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 THE MATRIX RELOADED
3 X-MEN 2
4 TILL THERE WAS YOU
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 WALANG KAPALIT

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT

8294075

1 WALANG KAPALIT
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 THE MATRIX RELOADED
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN

2514302

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 TILL THERE WAS YOU
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 KIKAY

SM CITY DAVAO

2976998

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 X-MEN 2
4 TILL THERE WAS YOU
5 JUNGLE BOOK 2
6 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM BICUTAN

776-3055

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 THE MATRIX RELOADED

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

859-2804

1 THE MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 JUNGLE BOOK 2
4 X-MEN 2

THE PODIUM CINEMA

18 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center Mandaluyong City
633-8976

THE MATRIX RELOADED
11:10 FS/11:40 MF/2:30/5:20/8:10/
10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/1:25 END

THE MATRIX RELOADED
11:05 MF/1:50/4:40/9:55 LFS/
10:20 LMF/12:45 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 - Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate : P120.00 - After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS

@ Robinsons Malls

call-a-movie: 536-7812

NOW SHOWING

Galleria

632-9115-16
633-7641 loc. 279

THX MATRIX RELOADED 11:20, 2:10, 5:00, 7:50, 10:30 LMF, 12:50 END
2 BRINGGING DOWN THE HOUSE
3 MATRIX RELOADED
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 MATRIX RELOADED
6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 BEHIND THE GREEN DOOR
8 THE HOURS
9 TILL THERE WAS YOU
10 X-MEN 2

MATINEE PRICE: P90/THX cinema · P75/1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS ·

Ermita

536-7809-12

1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 X-MEN 2
3 TILL THERE WAS YOU
4 THE HOURS
5 MATRIX RELOADED
6 WALANG KAPALIT
7 MATRIX RELOADED

Metro East - Marcos hway

682-8193 / 8280

1 X-MEN 2
2 THE HOURS
3 MATRIX RELOADED
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 TILL THERE WAS YOU
6 MATRIX RELOADED
7 KIKAY
8 WALANG KAPALIT

Novaliches

935-3229-30

1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 MATRIX RELOADED
3 X-MEN 2
4 THE HOURS
5 BEHIND THE GREEEN DOORS
6 KIKAY
7 TILL THERE WAS YOU
8 WALANG KAPALIT

Malabon Citisquare

288-0985 / 288-2575

1 KIKAY
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 MATRIX RELOADED
4 X-MEN 2

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.

(045)875-1927
(045)961-5270

1 X-MEN2
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 JUNGLE BOOK 2
4 TILL THERE WAS YOU
5 MATRIX RELOADED
6 MATRIX RELOADED

Imus

471-8188 / 875-3838

1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 X-MEN 2
3 TILL THERE WAS YOU
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 KIKAY

Sta. Rosa Laguna

(049)837-0907

1 X- MEN 2
2 MATRIX RELOADED
3 WALANG KAPALIT
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 TILL THERE WAS YOU

Bacolod

441-0453 / 0459

1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 WALANG KAPALIT
3 MATRIX RELOADED
4 X-MEN 2
5 TILL THERE WAS YOU
6 JUNGLE BOOK 2

Iloilo

336-8077-78

1 MATRIX RELOADED
2 X-MEN 2
3 RING 2
4 MATRIX RELOADED
5 WALANG KAPALIT
6 JUNGLE BOOK 2

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Very little known of 'Matrix' makers

LOS ANGELES — The realm of "The Matrix" is full of question marks, but here's a brain-twister from reality: Who are the elusive brothers behind the computer-phobic fantasy?

Larry and Andy Wachowski, the former carpenters and comic-book scribes from Chicago who dreamed up the parallel digital world of "The Matrix Reloaded," do their best to remain out of sight.

They have refused to be interviewed since the release of 1999's "The Matrix." Their official Warner Bros. biography mentions their, only other directing credit, "Bound," before claiming, "Little else is known about them."

Those who know the Wachowskis say they are slightly timid "regular guys" who love basketball, their parents and hiding from the press.

Keanu Reeves, who stars in the "Matrix" films as a man trying to save humanity from a counterfeit computer universe, says the brothers can be alternately intensely focused, prone to joking or deeply reserved.

Each also seems to know what the other is thinking.

"You can go to either of them and ask a question and much more often than not they'll agree and tell you the same thing," Reeves said. "They are independent and together."

Both are married, have thinning hairlines (Andy showed up at the "Reloaded" premier with a shaved head) and favor backward baseball caps. Both are college dropouts who wrote comic books and horror scripts while supporting themselves through carpentry and house painting.

The bespectacled Larry, 37, is shorter and thinner than his sibling. He projects a professorial image

Andy, 35, looks like he could be his older brother's bodyguard: taller, broad-shouldered and thicker, his mouth sometimes rimmed by a dark goatee. Most say Andy is the quieter of the two.

"The Matrix" films are a fusion of the brothers' biggest interests: Hong Kong kung-fu movies, gritty Japanese animation, computer games, fairy tales and Eastern mysticism. "They kind of cooked it all up and made a souffle out of it," said producer Joel Silver.

AP

FESTIVAL DE CA

'MATRIX' is represented in Cannes by stars Carrie-Anne Moss, Hugo Weaving, Laurence Fishburne, Jada Pinkett-Smith and Keanu Reeves,

Joyce goes to the malls to promote videoke CDs

SHOW TIME

JOYCE Jimenez continues her mall tour to promote her "Private Joyce" videoke collection, now available in the market under BMG Records Pilipinas.

Joyce will be at Robinson's Place Ermita on May 24, Robinson's Metro East in Cainta on May 25 and Robinson's Novaliches on May 31.

An autograph session will be held for buyers of the much talked-about videoke collection that comes in a four-volume package. The collection contains all-time favorites, pop, pop-standards and OPM tunes. Buyers will also get a free Joyce Jimenez poster.

Joyce will be present in a videoke singing contest in the malls. BMG Records has set up booths where mall-goers can register their names.

"Private Joyce" the videoke collection features Joyce in her sexiest, yet most tasteful videoke clips megged by veteran director Rico Gutierrez.

Joyce is featured in a provocative bed scene, shower number, as a she-devil, a truant beachcomber, a Spanish señorita and an Arabian princes among many others.

Fans will have a chance to experience a private time with Joyce via PLDT's "Love Notes" hotline (1-908-1-143-444). Call and listen to "Private Joyce" love stories, love advice and get a chance to win prizes in a special raffle.

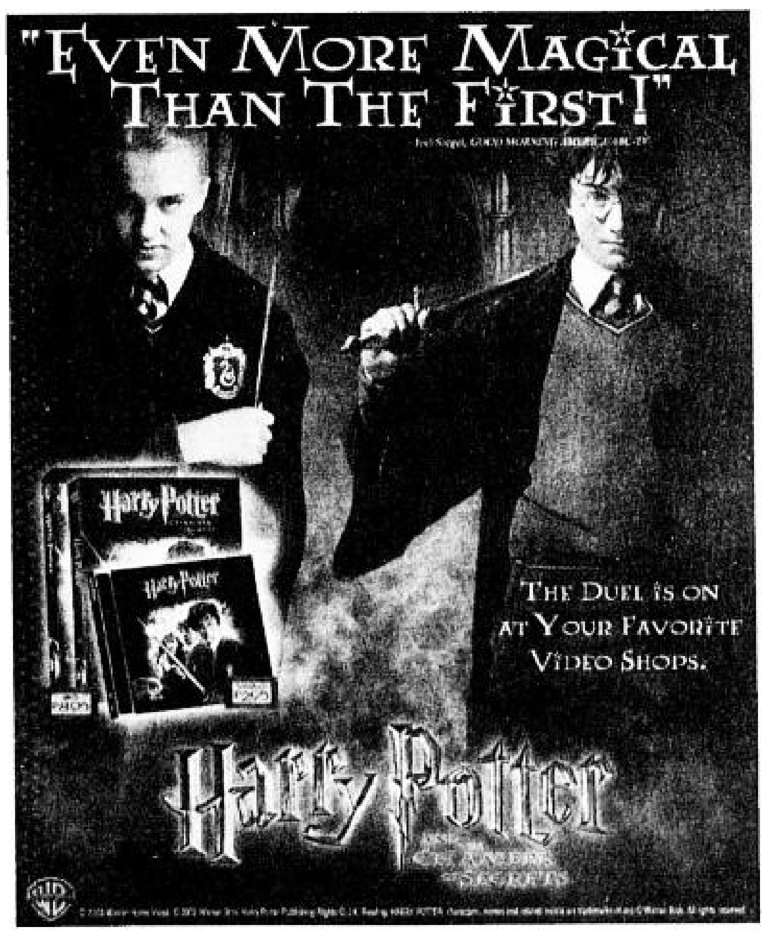
One lucky winner will receive a special call from Joyce herself.

"Private Joyce" the videoke collection is sponsored by PLDT, Manila Hotel, Sun Village Resort Boracay and Sea Air.

The collection is exclusively distributed by BMG Records (Pilipinas) Inc.

JIMENEZ

MTRCB RATING PG-13
PATOK SA PUSO
ANG BIGGEST BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE
NINA MEGA AT GOMA
Sharon Cuneta Richard Gomez
Walang Kapalit
Introducing MIRIAM QUIAMBAO & PAOLO BEDIONES
Directed by JOEL C. LAMANGAN dgpi VIVA
WINNER CORNED BEEF DUNKIN' DONUTS LEONARDO SuperFerry
NOW SHOWING
Download WALANG KAPALIT logos, picture messages and ringtones for a chance to
WIN P25,000 CASH
just text VIVA to 224


"EVEN MORE MAGICAL THAN THE FIRST!"
THE DUEL IS ON AT YOUR FAVORITE VIDEO SHOPS.
Harry Potter AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 MATRIX RELOADED 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00 R13
CINEMA 2 MATRIX RELOADED 12:00, 2:45, 5:30, 8:15, 11:00 R13
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496
MUSIC MUSEUM
MAY 24, 2003 DINGDONG AVANZADO 8:00PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7
Ali 1 TILL THERE WAS YOU
Ali 2 WALANG KAPALIT
Ali 3 X-MEN 2
Ali 4 MATRIX RELOADED
Ali 5 MATRIX RELOADED
Ali 6 THE HOURS
Ali 7 KIKAY
ARANETA COLISEUM
MAY 19 & 21 NCA 7-COCK DERBY
MAY 25 PBA GAMES
MAY 31 PBA FANS DAY
JUNE 14 MARTIN & REGINE CONCERT
JUNE 16 18 20 WORLD SLASHER CUP
ELEPHANT WORLD
ELEPHANT SHOW
REOPENING SOON !
FUN RIDES
TAGADISCO • VIKING SHIP
START 4PM (DAILY)

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	KIKAY
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	PUNLA
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	WALANG KAPALIT
B	KIKAY
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CINEMA-2	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	WALANG KAPALIT
CINEMA-2	KIKAY
CINEMA-3	TILL THERE WAS YOU
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-6	XEREX
CINEMA-7	BAYARAN
CINEMA-8	PINOCCHIO
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-12	THE HOURS
CINEMA-14	X-MEN 2
CINEMA-15	WALANG KAPALIT
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	WALANG KAPALIT
CINEMA 2	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA 3	X-MEN 2
CINEMA [illegible]	TILL THERE WAS YOU
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

MTRCB RATING PG 13
MUNIZ DUFF
AGENT CODY BANKS
OPENS MAY 28

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

THE HOURS P13 1:45,4:35, 7:25,10:15	MATRIX: RELOADED R13 12:40,3:30, 6:20,9:10	MATRIX: RELOADED R13 1:15,4:05, 6:55,9:45
MATRIX: RELOADED R13 2:20,5:10, 8:00,10:45	THE HOURS R13 12:20,2:45,5:10, 7:35,10:00	MATRIX: RELOADED R13 12:05,2:55,5:45, 8:35,11:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

AYALA CINEMAS
OPENS MAY 21 AT ArtFilm
DARING, AWARD-WINNING, EXTRAORDINARY
"BRILLIANT!"
AUTO FOCUS
GREG KINNEAR & WILLEM DAFOE
A peek into the secret life of Hollywood celebrity known to audiences as the star of 1960s TV series Hogan's Heroes, Bob Crane. But behind the loving wife (RITA WILSON), the successful comedic career & the public adoration lies an obsession for the forbidden. Auto Focus chronicles Bob Crane's downward spiral into erotic addiction from his promiscuous lifestyle & unconventional hobbies to his mysterious death.
Auto Focus creates an absorbing portrait of a man whose carnal hunger brought about his eventual down fall as an [illegible]
COFFEE CLUB DISCUSSION ON "AUTO FOCUS"
on May 21 at 7pm.
For inquiries, contact 752-7866 or 752-7872.
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R-18)
NOKIA INQUIRER

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Everybody loves a love team

From page C2

curse of the flop terminates all further pursuits, emotional and especially commercial. That is when careers crash.

The dissolution of love teams usually spells disaster for the male in the pairing. If one carefully traces all the major pairings that have broken or shaken the ground of local cinema history, then one can easily see that the female is not only the survivor but the victor. Possessed not only with competence but also talent honed in so many projects, the actress can eventually shed her on-screen and publicity sweetheart, gather a few acting trophies and not fade into the list of where-are-they-now?

Changed lives

The actor, however, despite being effective and dashing, will be disposed, recycled or simply rejected, forever stigmatized by some assumed sin of hurting the innocent sweetheart. He can hang around doing supporting roles of best friends or *contravidas*, trying the action genre or waiting long enough in the wings to eventually do father roles.

There is unfairness and cruelty in the process. It takes two to tango, but only the queen survives. That was the way it was and that is the way it still is.

Everybody loves a love team. For as long as movies are meant to function as pure entertainment or even anesthesia to the most trying of times, the fabrication and illusion of romance will always be the perfect antidote to problems big or small, real or imagined.

The reality of the changed lives of actors and actresses is no longer the concern of both the producer and the public. That, after all, does not translate into box-office numbers and that is the name of the game.

Willie, director fight 'over woman'

From page C1

added, "but he (Willy) was so stubborn."

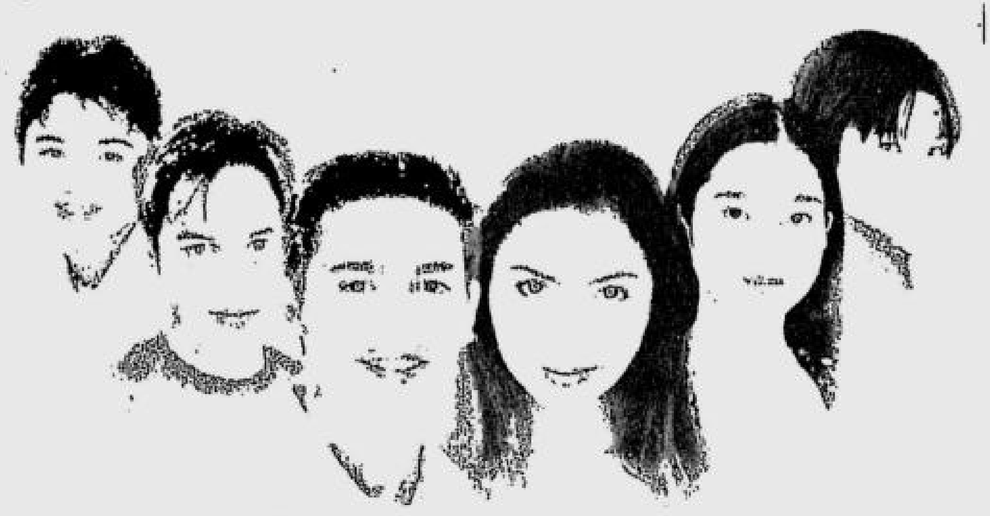
"There is conflict in every show," Revillame insisted. "I am very proud of what I do in 'Willingly Yours' and would not do anything to jeopardize my job."

ABS-CBN management is said to be set to transfer the female staff member to another show.

A recent ratings survey, a copy of which INQUIRER Entertainment obtained from the staff member, showed that "Willingly Yours" shared the No. 1 spot with GMA 7's "Maynila" in the once-a-week daytime program category.

"Willingly Yours" received a 15.6 percent rating while "Wish Ko Lang," its rival program on GMA 7, received 15.4 percent. *Marinel R. Cruz*

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED
OPENS WEDNESDAY, MAY 21
Dina Bonnevie Ricky Davao
Cogie Domingo Maxene Magalona
Jiro Manio Paolo Ballesteros Alwyn Uytingco



Kung bawa't anak
ay anghel sa lupa,
bawa't ina ay langit.
Anghel Sa Lupa

A REGAL ENTERTAINMENT INC. PRESENTATION

Directed By
Jose Javier Reyes, dgpi

Looks can be deceiving.
Karen Mok Shu Qi Zhao Wei
夕陽天使
so close
www.so-close.com

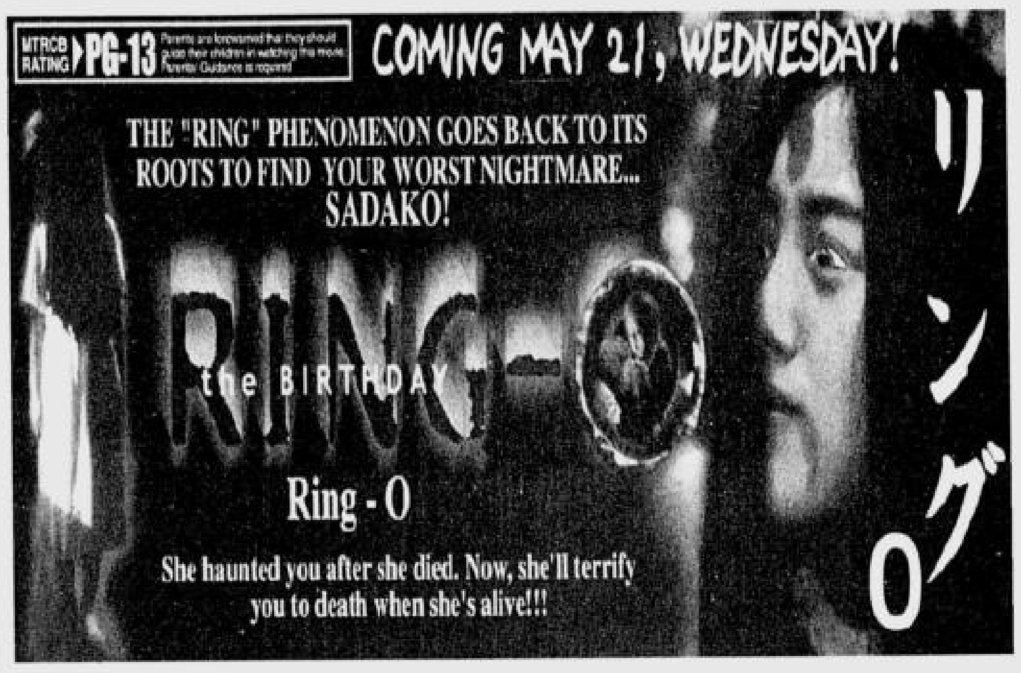
MTRCB ▶ R-13
Strictly for 13 years of age and up
Sexy Asian angels display amazing martial arts techniques in 'So Close'

Lynn (Shu Qi) and Sue (Zhao Wei) are sexy and beautiful sisters whose parents were brutally killed by powerful underworld figures. Disillusioned with the law and armed with amazing computer and kung fu skills (not to mention an enviable fashion style), the seductive sisters become professional assassins, killing criminals for other criminals.

Gutsy and brilliant female cop Yat Hong (Karen Mok) relentlessly pursue the sisters, who are in turn fascinated by their tough adversary.

SO CLOSE, starring Asia's most alluring and talented young actresses, features the coolest, breath-taking martial arts sequences from world-renowned director Cory Yuen, Jet Li's martial arts choreographer in THE ONE, KISS OF THE DRAGON and ROMEO MUST DIE. Don't miss it!

OPENS MAY 21 !



MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Parents are forewarned that they should guide their children in watching this movie. Parental Guidance is required
COMING MAY 21, WEDNESDAY!
THE "RING" PHENOMENON GOES BACK TO ITS ROOTS TO FIND YOUR WORST NIGHTMARE... SADAKO!
Ring - O
She haunted you after she died. Now, she'll terrify you to death when she's alive!!!

MATRIX RELOADED

NOW SHOWING
AYALA CINEMAS
GLORIETTA 1 & 4
GREENBELT 1 & 3
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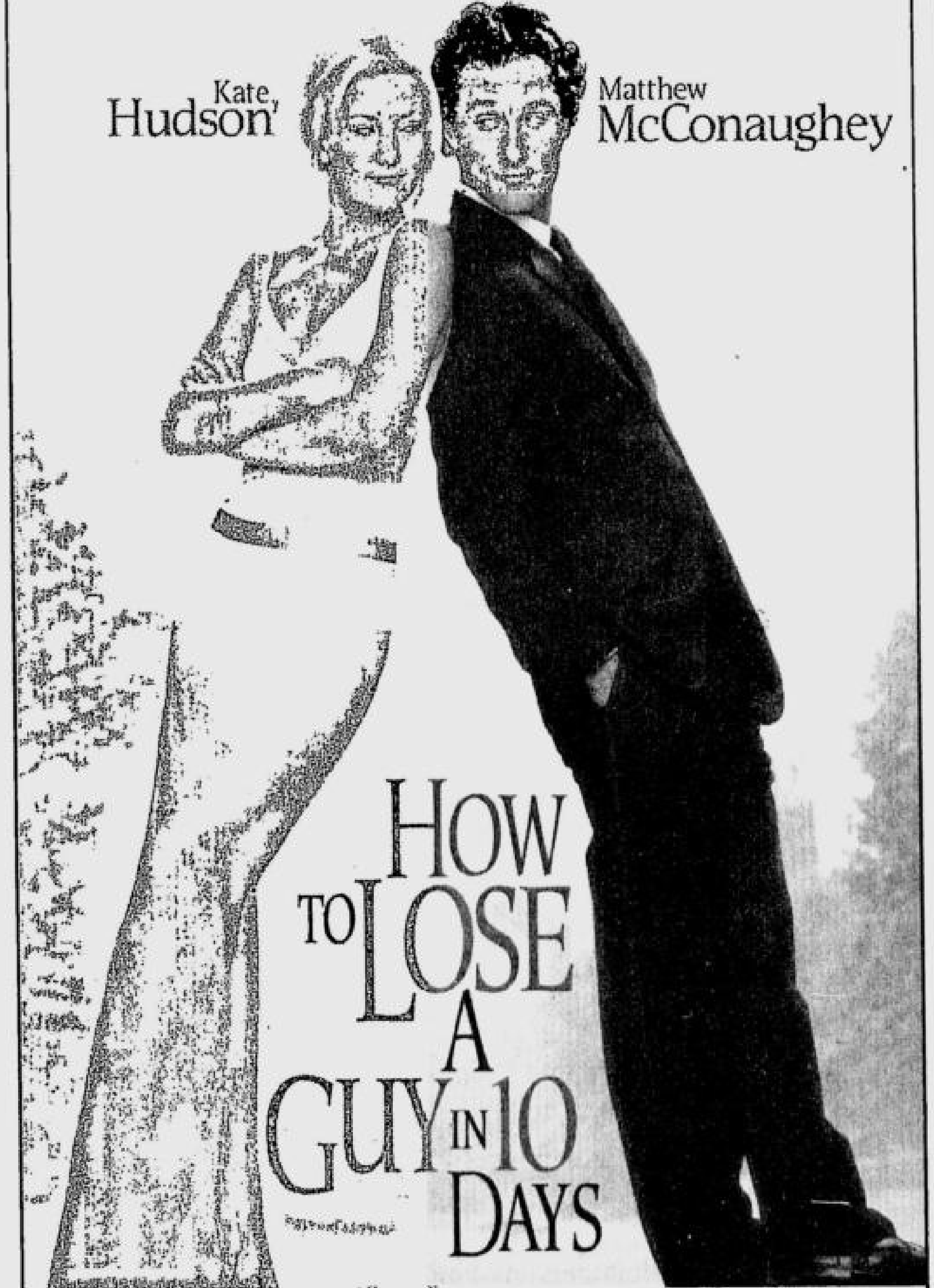
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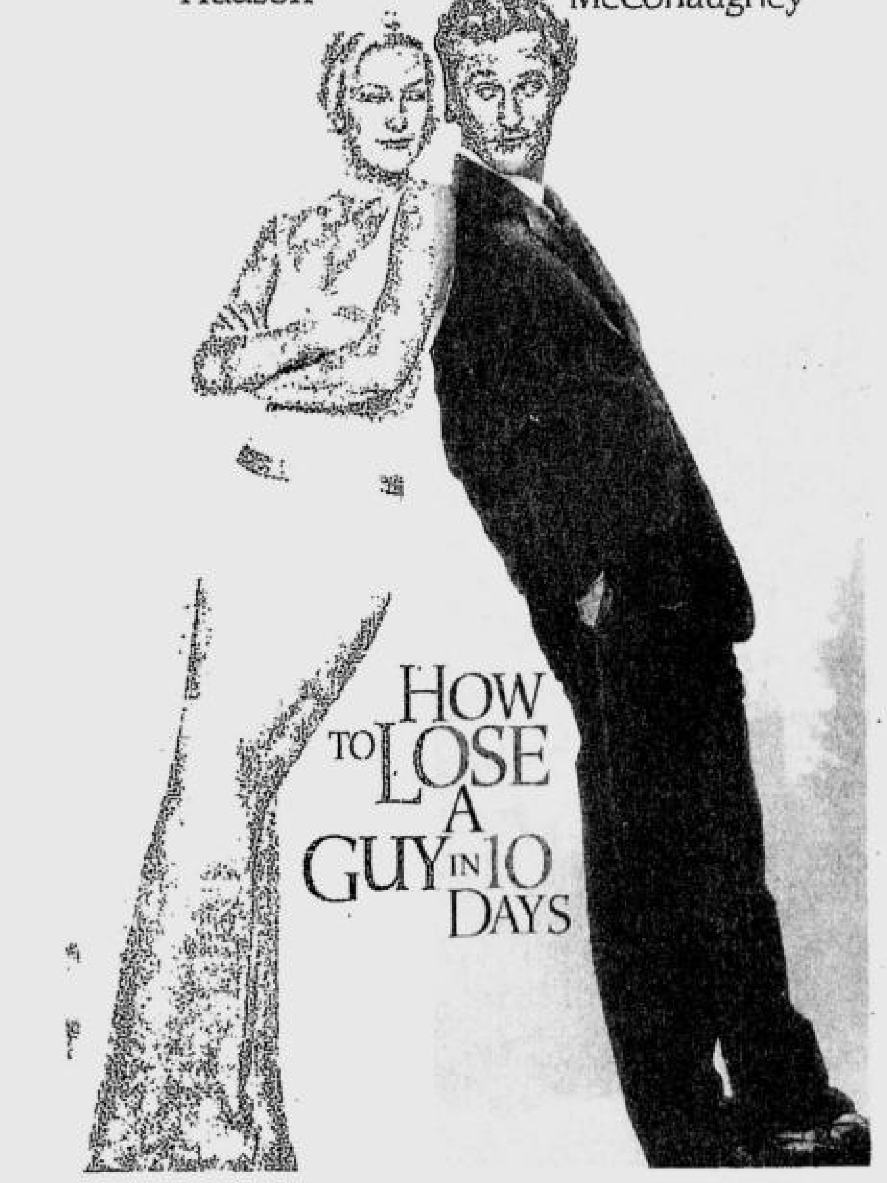
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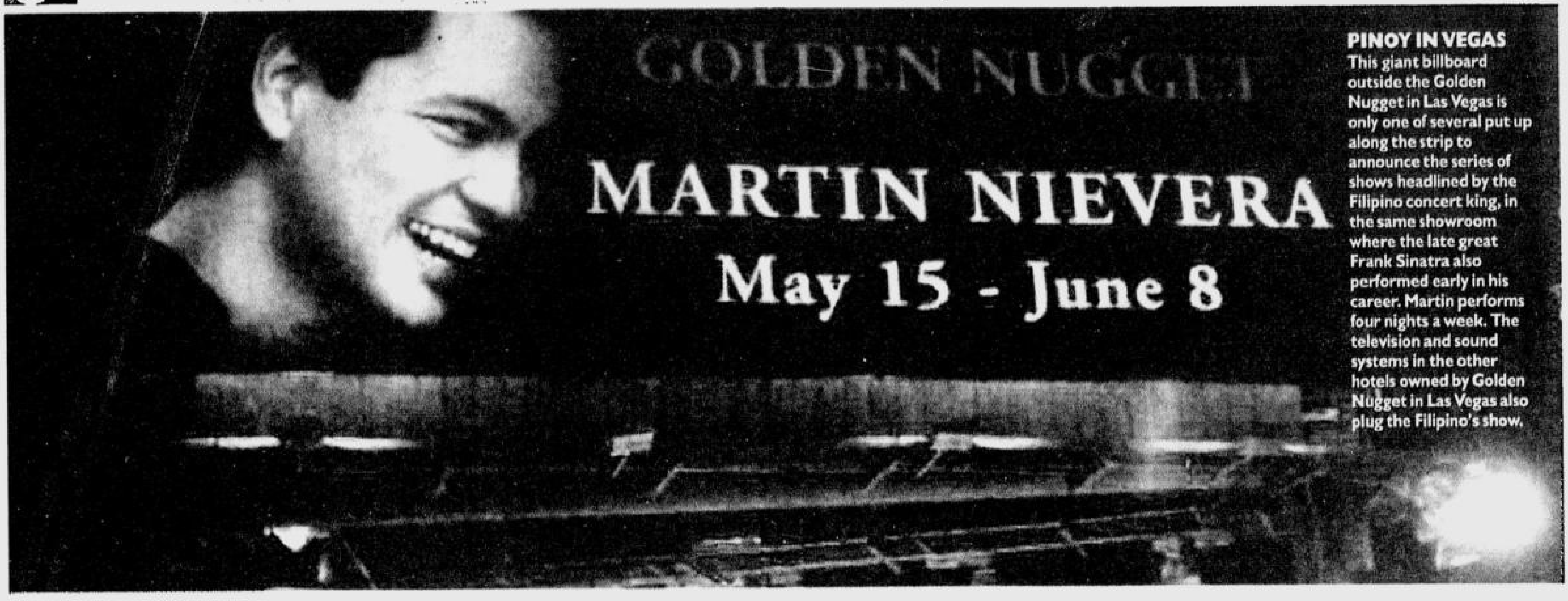

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Horror drama works because of fine acting

Paolo Fabregas is mesmerizing as an actor in the role of a person who had close encounters of the macabre kind

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

OF STAGE

AN OLD, abandoned, decrepit mansion that has given the neighborhood on an island nightmares for years. Chilling coincidences of children meeting violent deaths following the sudden sighting of a phantom figure. A pale-faced bloodless lady in mourning roaming the hapless town for vengeance.

Stephen Mallatratt's "The Woman in Black," presented by Repertory Philippines and directed by Zeneida Amador, narrates its stories in flashback.

Lawyer Arthur Kipps (Miguel Faustmann) desperately needs an actor to tell his literally near-fatal story and re-enact the whole experience to his close friends and family, simply because it's too ghastly to be true.

Believing that mere words would fail him to convince his loved ones of his tale, he hires a professional thespian, known only as the Actor (Paolo Fabregas) to re-enact it for him, scene by chilling scene.

What makes the story all the more horrible—and urgent—for Kipps is that the dire consequences of that one night in a late client's old home a year ago have haunted him up to the present.

The Actor takes on Kipps' part, and Kipps in turn plays all the other supporting characters (the villager, Kipps' friend, the coachman).

In effect, in certain scenes, Fabregas assumes Faustmann's character while Faustmann wears several hats. The drama shifts from the present, with Kipps (Faustmann) going through the "script" with the Actor (Fabregas), then to a series of flashbacks with Fabregas now playing Kipps wandering into the mist, being chased by phantom riders, and getting scared out of his wits.

Except for certain scenes that give the prerequisite shock treatments, the material is so exquisitely written and packed with detail that one can simply close one's eyes, listen, and watch the whole play come alive in the imagination.

Fabregas' first-person narrative of Kipp's tribulation is a stand-out. The rational, sober lawyer with an unswerving dedication to duty is simply out of his league in a land riddled with ghost stories and curses. Through Fabregas, we sense the slow deterioration of his composure from snobbish curiosity, dawning incredulous belief, and finally terror that can only grasp at survival.

The sheer beauty of the performance is enhanced by the simplicity of the plot. This plot in turn is complemented by the depth and complexity of the author's prose.

The audience, who screamed and held

HORROR/ D2

REP actors Paolo Fabregas (left) and Miguel Faustmann in a scene from "The Woman in Black."

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A dream show gets a dream star

By Gibbs Cadiz

BITUIN Escalante

Bituin Escalante gives a performance for the ages in a show that capsizes our expectations of what a Broadway musical should be

FROM the empty seats that littered Greenbelt's Onstage Theatre during its month-long run, "Dreamgirls" was obviously not the smash hit production its producers had hoped it would be.

The applause was often subdued and scattered. It was nowhere near the roof-raising exuberance exhibited by audiences at the two previous incarnations of "Rent."

The crowds did rise in the end for much-deserved ovations to Jett Pangan and Bituin Escalante, the show's best performers. But you got the feeling this was a musical that simply failed to knock people's socks off.

There may be a reason for that. "Dreamgirls" is a grown-up musical. On the surface it tells the story of a Supremes-like group's long hard climb to fame and its various complications.

On a deeper level, it turns out to be a compelling picture of musical history, chronicling the often-wrenching changes that black music, and black culture, have had to endure to gain acceptance in white mainstream America.

The music of "Dreamgirls" paints an evocative memorial to a vanished era of soul—the sweaty, raunchy, unapologetically adult sound that blacks conjured to channel the agonies and burdens of their long oppression. Soul was loud, brash, aggressive—too loud, in fact, for the well-bred tastes of an America dancing and crooning to the post-war calming comforts of Perry Como and Vic Damone.

As "Dreamgirls" more than makes clear, the passage from pure soul to bland pop was not an accident of history. It was a departure dictated by a market too narrow in its appreciation for real musical diversity, and a culture too bigoted for its time to acknowledge the validity of other forms of artistic expression.

The tragedy was that many black music executives themselves helped in burying soul.

"We need a lighter sound to cross over to the pop charts," an impresario/record producer tells Effie White, the erstwhile lead singer of the Dreamettes.

If they were to sell records, Effie White was to slide over to backup status, her place as the group's lead singer to be given over to Deena Jones (Anna Fegi), who produced a softer, mellower sound to Effie's ethnic powerhouse pipes. She was the Dreamettes' ticket to acceptance in such bastions of Americana as the chic hotels that dotted Miami Beach.

Epic feel

Henry Krieger's music and Tom Eyen's lyrics powerfully convey an epic feel to this musical evolution.

From the fiery rhythm-and-blues explosions of James Thunder Early (Jett Pangan, also impressively understudied by Nyoy Volante), who reluctantly segues in the second act from his patented sound to the first stirrings of the smooth soul-pop stylings that the likes of James Ingram would perfect decades later, to the birth of Donna Summer and disco music, "Dreamgirls" offers a stunning palette of musical forms that brings to life a crucial crossroads in American music history.

Perhaps it was this anchorage in musical styles not exactly popular hereabouts that doomed "Dreamgirls" to a less-than-stellar run. Theatergoers who expected to sink into a show of grand, soaring Broadway melodies were instead treated to a musical about backstabbing divas and lecherous con men belting out songs that, with the exception of the anthemic "Family" and the buoyant "Dreamgirls," were plainly unhummable.

True to its soul-R&B roots, Krieger's music is jagged, percussive, unwilling to go mellow. Its stridency isn't for everyone—not here, anyway.

Ours is a country, after all, that, for all its natural musicality, is incuriously reluctant to embrace musical forms more challenging than pop. For every non-singing celebrity like Judy Ann Santos (and now the Powerboys? Please!) who gets to make—and sell—records, there are unique, genuine talents out there who subsist on marginal recognition—Louie Reyes, Richard Merck, Grace Nono, Noel Cabangon.

Life as art

And then there's Bituin Escalante. If there's any clearer example of life imitating art, "Dreamgirls" must be it for her. Asked by Martin Nievera last year on "Martin Late at Night" what her dream role would be, she said, "Effie White in 'Dreamgirls.'" Now we know why.

How many times must Escalante have heard that linchpin line spoken to her—"We need a lighter sound to cross over to the pop charts"—in her arduous climb to show business recognition? Here is a girl of immense vocal gifts, a voice that recalls Aretha Franklin in its soulful grandeur, yet time and again reduced to singing pap on "A.S.A.P" every other Sunday.

Oftentimes derided for being plain, plump, and not "*pang-masa*," Escalante nevertheless dazzles every time she's on stage, creating complex, highly nuanced characters with her commanding voice.

In a field dominated by so-called divas of the Mariah/Whitney mold, Escalante has found it hard to gain a foothold. Her first album (produced by Rock Records) tanked, hardly registering on the radar of radio DJs intent on promoting only the latest sounds from Britney Spears & Co.

In the beginning, Escalante had the fortitude to celebrate her black-inspired talent by doing "Neither One of Us," "Respect" and similar numbers in her TV and bar appearances. But the demands of middle-of-the-road stardom are clearly working their way into her system.

Witness how her big, booming voice is reduced to a reedy whimper in "Kung Ako Na Lang Sana," a song designed to win in one of those musical competitions where popular acceptability is a prime criterion. A lighter sound, indeed, that gave her her first hit single.

Versatile

Escalante could simply be called versatile for such vocal transformations—and who would argue with a hit?—but what does it really say about an industry and a market that forces its talents to conform to cramped standards of what's musically and commercially acceptable?

That's why it is to Escalante's credit that, no doubt despite the barrage of well-meaning advice for her to change her looks, her sound, her style, she has remained true to theater as an art form that fully respects her talent.

In "Dreamgirls," she is clearly the star, and not only because she comes to it as the most well-known actor in an ensemble of talented performers. It's also because, in a role she clearly identifies with, she gives a performance for the ages.

Nothing in the show offers her a better showcase of her theatrical abilities than in Effie White's most famous showstopping number, "And I Am Telling You I'm Not Going."

Escalante turns the song on its head by starting out low and slow. To people familiar with Jennifer Holliday's definitive version, this must have seemed a cop-out, a way out of the punishing notes that pepper the song shotgun-style right through to the end.

But Escalante has something else in mind. She keeps the notes downcast for about two-thirds of the song, and then triumphantly rises up to its full register in the last ringing verse.

By this time she has crawled, stumbled, clawed her way into the arms of the man who was leaving her, and when she bellows out the last line, tears, melted makeup and all—"You're gonna love—ME!"—she has achieved a rare thing: a performance of a cliché that was fresh and iconic, original yet familiar at the same time.

To fans of Jennifer Holliday (and Lillias White, who offers a creditable version in a concert show of "Dreamgirls" in 2001, with fellow Broadway luminaries Audra McDonald and Heather Headley), this is by no means a small achievement. Holliday's template has always been the way "And I Am Telling You" was supposed to be sung, and to see it done differently, in a brilliantly effective way, was extraordinary.

Not a show-off

We've seen Escalante sing the song in full diva mode on "A.S.A.P" a couple of times. We know it as a taxing piece of vocal showmanship that had made Regine Velasquez (and who knows how many other hopefuls) winners in singing contests (Velasquez won in Hong Kong with this song).

But it turns out that "And I Am Telling You" achieves its greatest impact when it arises out of an emotional narrative, unbidden and unannounced, in combination with action, context and dramatic tension.

Against the impulse to show off, Escalante had made a supreme artistic choice: the song would be in service of the story. It's a decision that reflects well on her. Now we have the pleasure of knowing there's also a brave intelligence behind that splendid voice.

Bobby Garcia deserves as much kudos for giving Escalante great roles to go to town with. From "Rent," where she burst into prominence after singing a glorious solo in "Seasons of Love," to her startlingly unique interpretation of Mary Magdalene in "Jesus Christ Superstar," to "tick, tick...BOOM!" and "The Rocky Horror Show," Garcia has shown a gift for choosing parts that could only make his muse shine brighter—damn the gods of conformity.

It's been a great partnership so far, surely one of the most important artistic collaborations to emerge in local theater in recent years.

The Bituin & Bobby Show will also have its end, but in the meantime, we can dream otherwise, can't we?

E-mail the author at gibbs@100.ph

Opera on Japanese Catholic premieres. . .

From page D4

Strong conviction

Edward Ishita, director of the Tokyo Opera Association, said Lord Takayama's strong conviction inspired him to write the libretto. Although not a Catholic, Ishida said Takayama's belief in religious or personal freedom was a virtue that should be emulated.

His collaboration with Fr. Maramba on the opera started four years ago. Fr. Maramba, a composer of religious operas like "Aba! Santo Niño" and "La Naval," and his friends translated the Japanese work into English.

With colleague Fr. Rodrigo Perez, OSB, Fr. Maramba rewrote the libretto to give it a literary touch, which was incorporated into the original Japanese.

The involvement of UST people seems appropriate since the university Graduate School has a Lord Takayama Professorial Chair in Philippine-Japanese Studies, initiated by the Lord Takayama Jubilee Foundation organized 15 years ago by De Pedro.

The foundation spearheads the campaign for the beatification of Takayama.

This year a statue of Lord Takayama will be installed at the garden of the UST Graduate School.

A statue of Lord Takayama has already been installed at Plaza Dilao in Paco, Manila. In 1977, the city government, with the support of Takatsuki City, made Dilao, site of the Japanese settlement in the 17th century, the Philippines-Japan Friendship Park.

Fr. Maramba said that for the Takayama production, he wrote music that "people can listen to, not too abstract or intellectual, and not too saccharine either."

Media people invited to the opera's launch recently listened to a sampling of the songs and choruses—"Barcarolle," "Colors and Perfumes of Flowers," "Garaze's Agony."

Performers included soprano Rachelle Gerodias, baritone Noel Ascona, who will play the lead role of "Okun," and tenor Lemuel de la Cruz.

The cast is primarily made up of UST Conservatory of Music faculty members and students. Baritone Gamaliel Viray, who teaches at Sta. Isabel College, will play the role of Hideyoshi.

Also in the cast are Nenen Espina, Ronan Ferrer, Jose Randy Gilongo, Ma. Katrina Saporsantos, Joanna Go, Thea Perez, Jun Francis Jaranilla, Joliloryn Quitain, Wilson Cariaga, Maricialyn Lopez, Paulo Martin Trinidad, and Von Ryan Yu.

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Horror drama works because of fine acting

From page D1

their breath at the right places, is familiar with this kind of ghost story; the surprise factor should have been minimal. An actor less certain of his grasp of the material could simply have bored his audience with a plodding narration, sound effects notwithstanding.

But Fabregas' Kipps—and in the last scene, Fabregas' Actor—makes us relive the journey with the character.

Equal weight

This is not to detract from Faustmann's contribution. Again, a less mature actor, playing in effect a supporting character and a myriad of bit roles, would have simply been overwhelmed by the narration or pushed out by the lead role. Or, he could have competed for attention by unnecessarily overplaying the significant, if less flashier parts given him.

Faustmann as Kipps, and as the various members of the entire town, acts with equal weight and partnership to Fabregas' narrator. He doesn't just disappear into the background, nor does he attempt to convert the unlikely walk-on role of a coach man a star turn.

Nor is his part simply "supporting." But through Faustmann, we sense the living, breathing spirit of a town that is laboring under the shadow of a curse.

As the two men part ways at the end, Faustmann's Kipps becomes a far wiser, if sadder, man, finally beginning to put his demons to rest.

Meanwhile, the Actor is just realizing that his own battle has begun. The immense power and malice of the Woman in Black emerges as he realizes he has crossed the line dividing professional performance and the supernatural.

The audience, held in grip from curtain rise to curtain end, gasps with him down to the last second. Which goes to show that sometimes even the best chills can come from solid, straightforward narrative brought to life by two thespic craftsmen.

Repertory Philippines' "The Woman in Black" runs at the RCBC Plaza and the Filinvest Corporate Center until May 25. Call 887-0710.

FABREGAS plays the Actor and Faustmann as Lawyer Arthur Kipps

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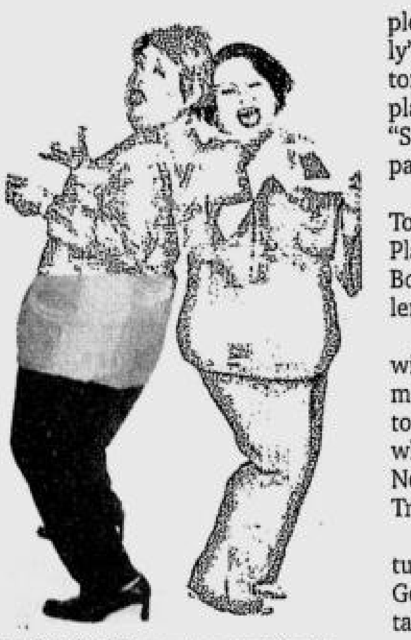
CARLO Orosa as Ugly, Agot Isidro as Ida, The Mother Duck, and Franco Laurel as Ugly

Manilans to hear 'honk' of award-winning musical

"HONK! The Ugly Duckling," Best Musical in the 2000 Laurence Olivier Awards in London, will soon be seen in Manila.

The theater company Trumpets will mount its own production of the musical retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's tale.

After conducting auditions for the more than 20 cast members, Trumpets announced that "Honk's" cast would include Carlo Orosa (Ugly Duckling) and Carla Martinez (Ida, the Mother Duck). Also in the cast are television personalities Franco Laurel and Agot Isidro, in her stage debut.



NANETTE Inventor and Sheila Francisco as Lowbutt, The Hen

Lana Jalosjos, who just completed "Dreamgirls," will be Ugly's love interest. Nanette Inventor and Sheila Francisco, who played Bloody Mary in London's "South Pacific," also have lead parts.

Other members of the cast are Tonipet Gaba, Noel Rayos, Sweet Plantado, Mayen Bustamante, Bongoy Manahan and Paolo Valenciano.

All performances of "Honk!" will have live music accompaniment. Brad Saak, musical director of "Honk!" in Singapore and who is now doing "Chicago" in New York, will be working in the Trumpets production.

Designing the set and costumes is New York-trained Gino Gonzales, while Gerry Fernandez takes care of lighting design.

Call Trumpets at 633-5010, 633-4387 or 635-4478 for tickets.

MAYEN Bustamante, Tonipet Gaba, Sweet Plantado and Noel Rayos

PINIKPIKAN conjures ritualistic vibes through chants, melodies and percussive pounding.

PHOTO FROM WWW.PINIKPIKAN.COM

World music, local roots

By Yanna Verbo Acosta
Contributor

> Pinikpikan's unique cross-cultural sound has gained it entry to world music circles and the European charts

IT'S four hours before showtime, and a few members of the group have arrived at the venue. The rest of the pack are on their way for sound check.

In between beer sets and several servings of *pulutan*, a rich conversation goes on, from personal and societal observations to philosophical and humorous outburst. One by one, the rest of the members arrive, and all the more charge up the discussion until the group is complete. This exchange, this communication never ceases, and is even taken to a higher level onstage.

At the stage manager's cue, the members get up onstage with their instruments. Already highly charged, they're ready for yet another intense performance.

"Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome... the internationally acclaimed Pinikpikan!"

Playing for a cause

Pinikpikan is now a regular entry on the list of some of the biggest musical events in the country.

The group recently performed at the annual Earth Day Jam held at the San Isidro Ruins in Intramuros. The night was a spectacular convergence of local artists who rendered heart-warming performances in celebration of Earth Day.

Jacqui Magno, Kuh Ledesma, John Lesaca, True Faith, South Border, Rockin' Revival, the Angforgettables, The Philippine Opera Company, The Earthsavers, Kyla and many others lent their talents to the celebration.

Ballet Philippines was there, too, to interpret the music of Pinikpikan through an intense dance number called "Buhay."

It was one of the pieces Ballet Philippines performed during Neo-Filipino (an annual project of BP) last February at the CCP. Asked why they chose to perform this particular piece, Ballet Philippines associate artistic director Alden Lugnasin said they have been trying to break away from the idea that Ballet Philippines catered only to the elite.

"Buhay," a beautifully choreographed number with sharp moves and unconventional angles, dramatically depicts the life struggles of the Filipino. This piece was perfect for the occasion, said Lugnasin.

The Earth Day Jam, an event organized by Lou Bonnevie's Dmitri Productions, was started by Lou's brother and Pinikpikan member Billy in 1999. First called the Green Concert, the show was held at the Quezon Memorial Circle and featured folk and ethnic bands. It was a rousing success, ensuring that it would become an annual event to be held at a different venue each time. Every year, the organizers also come up with a different theme and twist to the celebration.

In 2000, Earth Day Jam was held at White Beach in Puerto Galera and was titled "Down to Earth," with a week-long Drum Village held simultaneously. Lou also did her share by staging a similar event in Subic Bay called "Earth Born."

In 2001, a musical rally was held at Folk Arts Theater with a more diversified showcase of artists representing different musical genres. And last year, it was held at Hard Rock Café in Makati.

While the line-up of artists change every year, Pinikpikan stays on the list. The group has always considered it an honor to perform for a cause it believes in.

World music

Since its debut gig at the first Baguio Arts Festival, Pinikpikan has not deviated from its core musical roots. Classified under world music, it fuses the exotic sound of local tribal instruments and other ethnic colorations from other parts of the world with the more modern sounds of the electric guitar, bass guitar and drums.

Native instruments such as the *gabang* (bamboo xylophone) from Tawi-Tawi, *hegalong* (stringed lute) from Mindanao and *tungatong* (cut bamboo poles pounded on rock blocks) are some of Pinikpikan's musical tools. The group also uses percussion instruments from other cultures, such as the djembe of South Africa, darbuka and dumbek from the Middle East, and the conga of Latin America.

This unique hybrid sound has made Pinikpikan justifiably famous in other parts of the globe. Its music has already made it to the European charts.

Pinikpikan has made three albums, and while many musicians have come and gone, they often return to jam with the group in its many performances both inside the studio and on stage. The group's intense bonds are the key to its longevity and passion for its unique art.

You can say the group is perfectly cast: the mighty Dr. Stix on drums, Carol Bello providing powerful vocals, Sammy Asuncion with his compelling guitar riffs, Louie Talan's bass grooves—plus the assemblage of excellent percussionists that include Billy Bonnevie, Dante Bosch, Gerry Baguio, Butch Aldana, Budeths Casinto, Tito Martinez and Boy Garrovillo.

Some of the other musicians who have worked with Pinikpikan through the years are Grace Nono, Bob Aves, Paul Zialcita, Jose Dufourt, Niño Hernandez, Mark Escueta and Mar Dizon.

Universal themes

Whenever friends borrow my Pinikpikan CDs, I always advice them to play the albums a bit louder. It's the only way to fully experience the ritualistic vibes, mesmerizing chants, percussive pounding and enthralling melodies that the group conjures.

Even better, Pinikpikan should be seen live. Its distinct sound and energetic playing has never failed to leave the audience amazed and clamoring for more.

While Pinikpikan is often invited to strictly-invitational events, mostly for the diplomatic and artistic communities, it refuses to regard itself as an elitist act. Its music is of and for the people, it says, and to drive home this point, a large part of Pinikpikan's yearly itinerary involves playing in different festivals around the country.

Which is only right, since on top of the native musical instruments the group uses, many of Pinikpikan's songs are, in fact, written in the country's different dialects. These songs draw their life from the richly panoramic culture of the Philippine countryside, even as they celebrate the universal themes of struggle, faith, hope, freedom, beauty, the environment, and the interconnectedness of all human beings.

Last year, Pinikpikan proudly represented the country in arts festivals in Cambodia and Singapore. The group is now working on a new album to be released before the year ends.

Koine stages one-acters by Chekhov, Villanueva

KOINE Theater Foundation, a company that aims to give performing arts scholarships and free classes to poor and disadvantaged children, presents its newest production at its home studio, Quickstep, at the 2nd floor of Forab Building, Kamuning Road, Quezon City.

The twin bill of one-act plays features "Ang Pamamanhikan" by Anton Chekhov, as translated into Filipino by the late National Artist for Theater and Literature Rolando Tinio (from the English translation by Elisaveta Fen), followed by Rene Villanueva's "Tatlo-Tatlo."

In "Ang Pamamanhikan," a man comes to his neighbor's house to ask the hand of his neighbor's daughter in marriage. But conflict arises when the marriage proposal turns into a discussion on land ownership and dogs.

"Tatlo-Tatlo" concerns three single old women who, for lack of money to pay, try to hide from the agent who sold them orange juice. While in hiding, their dreams of marriage and fear of growing old alone are exposed.

Koine Theater Foundation, led by its artistic director Niel de Mesa, has mounted a number of other unique, well-received productions, among them "Pilandok," a play for and by children with autism and Down's Syndrome; "Ala-Alamat," a musical that featured the talents of poor but brilliant scholars from Tondo and Batangas; and "Tinoso," an experimental dance movement play.

Show dates for "Ang Pamamanhikan" and "Tatlo-Tatlo" are on May 23, 24, 30 and 31, at 7:30 p.m. Call 410-4485.

Gantimpala Theater sets auditions

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation (GTF), with the National Parks Development Committee (NPDC), holds auditions for its 26th theater season today, 2-8 p.m., at the rehearsal hall of Concert at the Park Auditorium, Luneta, Manila.

Auditions are open to professional theater artists and aspiring actors and actresses who want to perform and experience the discipline of theater.

Applicants must be between 13-35 years old, male or female, with pleasing personality and stage presence. They must prepare the following: updated resumé, colored close-up and full-body photo, a monologue in English or Filipino, and song-and-dance number. Applicants are advised to cue their minus-one tapes.

Call 528-0603 or 0918-9212866.

Workshop teaches kids animation and sketching

KIDS can now learn about the work that goes behind the cartoons they love to watch in Faber Castell's Workshop on Animation and Imagination at SM Supermalls.

The workshop, conducted by Top Peg, a company that does animation for foreign firms, is open to kids aged 7-11. It will teach kids the basics of Filipino, Japanese and American animation.

Top Peg's Grace Dimaranan recently conducted a workshop on Basic Sketching at SM City North-Edsa. They learned Elements to Follow in an Animation Drawing, Animation Pose, Animation Movement Works, and Lip Synchronization.

Other workshops will be held May 20 at SM Storyland Southmall; May 22-24, SM City Fairview; May 27, Storyland in Fairview; and May 19-26, SM City Pampanga.

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Opera on Japanese Catholic premieres in June

Takayama, one of the first Japanese Catholics, was exiled to Manila for his religion

By Antonio C. Hila
Contributor

A CONTEMPORARY religious opera on the life of Justus (Justo) Okun Takayama (1553-1615) will have its world premiere in Tokyo, Japan, on June 25.

The show, which marks the first Filipino-Japanese artistic collaboration in operatic production, will be brought to other parts of Japan and the Philippines in August. It strengthens relations between Japan and the Philippines through the musical arts.

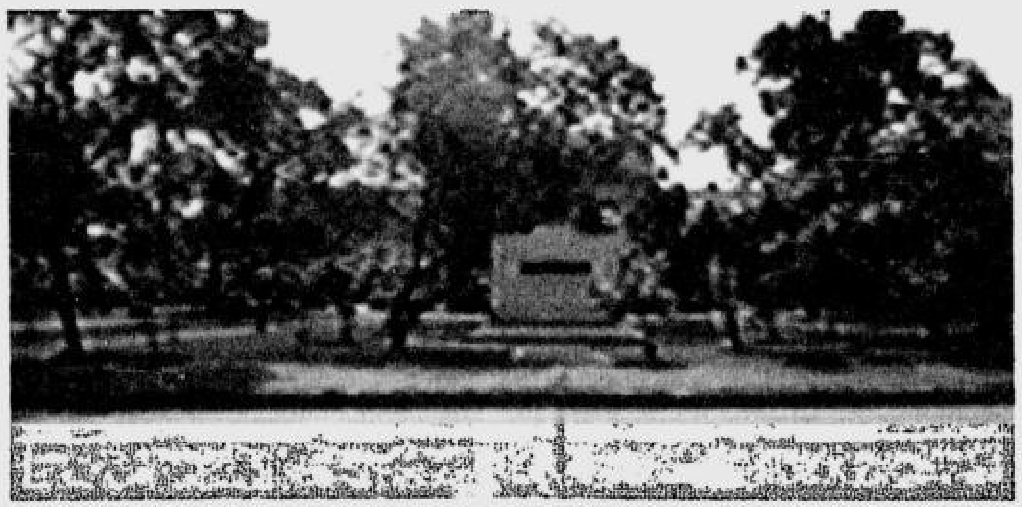
The opera focuses on the life of Takayama, one of the earliest Japanese converts to Catholicism who, with his family was deported to the Philippines in the 17th century. It commemorates his 450th birthday and the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the Japanese in Mindanao.

Edward Tuazon-Ishita wrote the libretto based on the novel "Okun Takayama" by Otohiko Kaga. Manuel Maramba, O.S.B., composed the music. The cast is composed of Japanese and Filipino singers.

The Japan production will have a Japanese libretto. In the Philippines, the libretto will be in English.

Professor Hermenegildo Ranera, conductor of the University of Santo Tomas Symphony Orchestra, is the musical director.

Eleven performances are lined up each in Japan and the Philippines. Aside from Tokyo, the opera will be shown in other key cities, from Kanazawa in the north to Okinawa in the south, for three weeks.


A STATUE of Lord Takayama stands guard at Plaza Dilao.

Centennial celebration

The opera will be staged in Davao to mark the centennial of the Japanese presence in Mindanao, Cebu, Manila and Baguio City

Prof. Ernie de Pedro, of the UST Graduate School, who devotes his time to the study of the life of Lord Takayama, has prepared a Positio (position paper) to help the Vatican in its research in connection with proposals for the Japanese's beatification. De Pedro completed the documentation of Takayama's life in 1995.

Takayama's family was among the early converts of the Jesuits' missionary work in Japan. He was baptized a Catholic in 1563 when he was 11 years old.

Takayama later became a *daimyo* or governor of Takatsuki, a castle town between Osaka and Kyoto, then the Japanese capital. He gained fame as a general, at one time serving as commanding general of Hideyoshi's bodyguard battalion. Takayama became famous as a builder of castles, a "*waka*" or poet, a teamaster, builder of churches, oratories and seminary. He was also an effective preacher.

After 12 years in Takatsuki, Hideyoshi, a powerful warlord during the time of the Japanese shoguns, sent him to Akashi in 1585. But Takayama's refusal to give up his new faith prompted Hideyoshi to reduce him to an ordinary samurai in Kanazawa in 1587. There he served a minor position until 1614.

Exiled for his religion

Takayama, together with his family and 147 other noblemen, were exiled to the Philippines, arriving in Manila on Dec. 21, 1614. The ouster followed the implementation of a shogunal edict prohibiting Christianity in Japan. The new Catholics were too prominent to be executed.

The Japanese were warmly received by the Spanish governor general and many Manilans who filled up the plaza fronting the Manila Cathedral. A "Te Deum" was intoned by the exiles inside the cathedral which was inaugurated two weeks earlier.

Lord Takayama brought back to the Dominicans (the order that runs UST) in 1614 the statue of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary ("La Japonesa") which survived World War II, and continues to be revered in Santo Domingo Church in Quezon City.

Unfortunately, Takayama died of an unspecified tropical illness on Feb. 3, 1615.

De Pedro said, as a holy man, Lord Takayama could be likened to Mother Teresa. About 406 books have been written about the Japanese nobleman since 1605.

Pope Sixtus V gave him a commendatory "*breve*" and exhorted him to hold on to his faith.

The Archbishop of Manila submitted a petition for Takayama's beatification to the Vatican in 1634, two decades after his death. The Catholic Church, which regards the place where one dies as his "birthplace" in heaven, considers Takayama as a son of Manila.

The closure of Japan for 230 years to the outside world prevented the consideration of Takayama's beatification. By this time, the petition for Takayama's beatification is considered an "ancient cause."

De Pedro said other plays on Takayama had been done before in Munich (1663); Vienna (1666); Landshu (1673); Lucerne (1682); Winnocx (1689); Kortrijk (1691 and 1698); Sint Winchsbergen (1698); Ellmangen (1724), and Solosthurn (1742).

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Monique Wilson and young company in London
p. E2

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Fil-Am sensation is new PPO conductor

EUGENE Fredrick Castillo of California's Camella Symphony and Washington DC's National Symphony gets the nod of the CCP search committee.

By Pablo Tariman
Contributor

WHEN Eugene Fredrick Castillo showed up at the audition conducted by the Cultural Center of the Philippines search committee for a new conductor and music director months ago, nobody knew that some years back, he had performed at the CCP twice—at the Main Theater and the Little Theater with the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Symphony Orchestra. In both instances, he was more than a revelation.

At that time, he conducted the UST Symphony in Poulenc's Concerts for Two Pianos with Reynaldo Reyes and David Buechner as soloists.

With the same orchestra, he conducted Barber's Adagio for Strings.

In both concerts, there was no doubt in my mind that he was the new conductor to watch.

After those concerts, he had written to the CCP asking if he could guest-conduct the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) and got no reply.

Meanwhile, he got to conduct the Orchestra Simfonica de Carlos Chavez in Mexico and the Candaquez Orchestra in Spain.

He was also warmly welcomed by the Cebu Youth Symphony Orchestra as one of its guest conductors.

Between the time he wrote to the CCP and the time he emerged as the top choice for conductor by the CCP search committee, Castillo was a conducting sensation in Sacramento, California, where he was music director of the Camella Symphony. He consistently got glowing reviews from the California press.

His Long Beach Symphony debut also got critical acclaim. Less than two years ago, he debuted with the National Symphony in Washington, D.C. (yes, the same orchestra that visited Manila in the '80s under Mstislav Rostropovich and had Cecile Licad as soloist in Saint Saen's Second Concerto).

Star

The Washington Post described him as the "true star of the evening."

Wrote the Post critic: "Eugene Frederick Castillo was persuasive in Ravel's Daphnis and Chloe Suite No. 2. Shaped with a sure sense of line and a beautifully gauged climactic build, the music unfolded with sultry languor, its busy inner glowing but always intelligible.

"Castillo sculpted the air (both with and without a baton) in sweeping, emotionally communicative arcs, driving the finale to an ecstatic white heat."

Described by California critics as "a fusion of passion and sensitivity," Castillo is California's Critic's Choice in the year 2000 and 2002 and was singled out as one of Sacramento's top rising stars.

In 1999, he received the top Ascap (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers) for Adventuresome Programming. Last year, Castillo got the top Ascap award for the second time.

Born in Hollywood from a couple that hailed from Pasay City and La Union, Castillo now shuttles between the National Symphony in Washington, where he is in the staff and concurrent cover conductor (he was personally chosen by the eminent Leonard Slatkin), and the Camella Symphony.

Castillo was also Slatkin's assistant during the latter's residency concerts with the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam, and earlier, the 2002 Proms Concert at the Royal Albert Hall in London.

"Maestro Slatkin is actually my role model," Castillo told the INQUIRER. "He had spent more than 25 years of his life nurturing an orchestra, and he has championed contemporary music by way of constantly playing works of living composers."

Castillo was, in fact, just vacationing in Pasay when he heard of the PPO auditions. He didn't consider himself a serious candidate.

He conducted the PPO in the last movement of Brahms's Fourth Symphony, and, with only a 10-minute notice, in Strauss' "Don Juan." Three made it in that audition, and he was one of them.

In the last round, the three conducted the PPO with a movement from Schumann's A Minor Piano Concerto and Abelardo's "Cinderella" Overture.

He got the jury's nod, hands down.

Experienced and exciting

Last week, the CCP board was informed of the search committee's choice. So it is most likely that Castillo would be appointed the successor of Ruggero Barbieri as PPO's new music director and conductor starting with the 2004 season.

He admits there is a lot of work to do before he takes over the PPO leadership. "I need to study the history of the orchestra, its membership, and the ideas of the CCP management about its overall mission. When I get that input, I will contribute my own artistic vision and take it from

FIL-AM/ E4

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Notes of a stage mother

By Marie Reyes
Contributor

I CAN'T believe it's been a year since that month we were in London, England. Suddenly I have the urge to write about our trip, probably for a number of reasons: seeing British Prime Minister Tony Blair addressing Parliament over the Iraq War, "Chicago" winning Best Picture honors at the Oscars and how it compared to the West End stage version—or perhaps because my daughter recently played Hermia in the yearly production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by the Grade 6 students of St. Scholastica's College, which reminded me that just last summer, we walked on the streets where Shakespeare lived!

When I opted for early retirement from work, I jokingly told my boss I would just be a stage mother to my daughter, Hannah. Little did I know I would live the joke. Not only would I mother my only child, I would also end up looking after eight other girls!

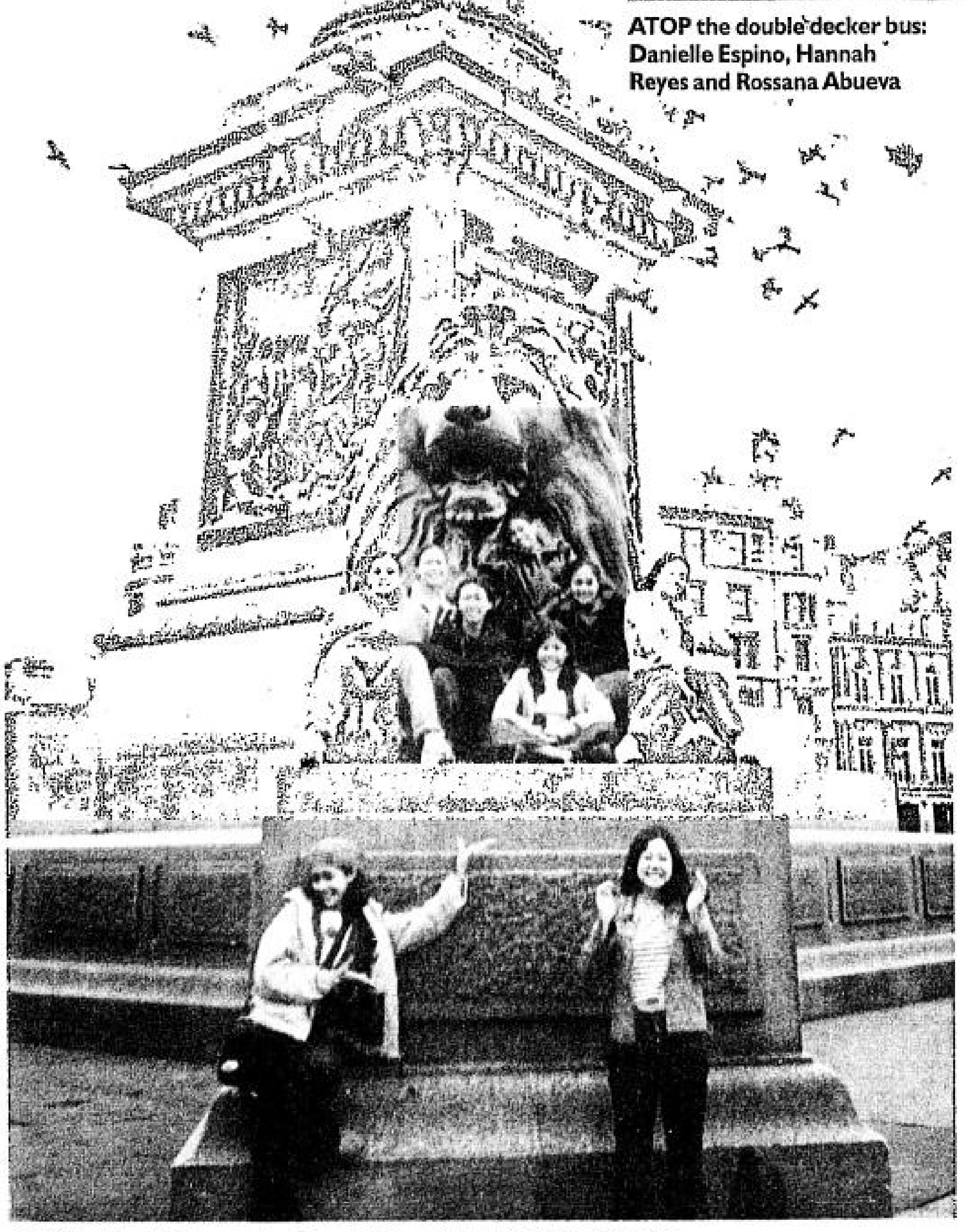
But I'm not complaining. In fact, the set-up proved to be a blessing in more ways than one.

At the New Voice Company of Monique Wilson, where our children are members, we parents have a tight bond and have formed a PTA. Since we're always on hand, we also get assignments during shows. Like members of an extended family, we look out after each other's kids, seeing to it that they're ready for performances (Have they been fed? Do they have their costumes?) and carpooling for rehearsals, workshops or shows whenever necessary.

Thus, when Monique, who was in London pursuing her MA degree in Theater, invited the children to London, the PTA was even more excited than the girls. We thought she wasn't serious when she mentioned it after the V-Day 2002 show, until we received the formal invitation by e-mail. We never imagined that, by enrolling our children in an NVC workshop, a bigger world of theater could open up to them.

Of course, being a self-confessed stage mother, I volunteered to chaperone the kids.

ATOP the double-decker bus: Danielle Espino, Hannah Reyes and Rossana Abueva


AIN'T no lion high enough... hopeful thespians at Trafalgar Square

Thanks to Monique Wilson's NVC, my daughter and seven other kids had the time of their young lives in London. With chaperone, of course

Prayer warriors

We only had a few days to prepare for the London Theatre Exposure Trip: While eagerly waiting for the supporting documents Monique and NVC's executive producer Rossana Abueva had to send, we worked on other requirements—passports, DSWD permits, travel-tax discounts, visa application forms.

We hunted for the most reasonable travel agencies, broke into groups to divide the errands, and helped each other with the financials, even if Monique and Rossana offered to take care of all the kids' needs while in London, including accommodations, food, transportation around the city and for out-of-town trips, tickets to West End shows, tuition for acting classes, entrance fees to museums.

We all lined up at the UK embassy for the visas, and though I was the only one who faced the consul, I knew I had prayer warriors waiting for me. After the interview, how we cried for joy when we were informed that we could pick up our visas that very afternoon!

We left Manila April 10 on a flight that stopped over in Frankfurt, Germany. I herded nine groggy, giggling girls from one terminal to the other for our connecting flight to London.

At Heathrow, thoughts played in my mind over what the immigration officer might think, seeing me with nine girls ages 10-16. Well, after looking through our papers and seeing the girls' eager faces (and mine as well), we got our signal to enter the UK.

It was a happy reunion we had with Monique, who was like a stage mother herself, shooting away with her handycam as soon as she saw us.

Dream come true

I had always dreamed of a European trip for my daughter and me, the kind where you stay in one place for a long time and feel the flavor of the city. This is easy in the United States where we have relatives and can stay long in one place with less expense. But Europe is another story. NVC helped us make that dream come true.

We rested the day after we arrived. After that, it was a flurry of daily activities. We started off with a trip to the Tower of London. With lunch bags in their backpacks (filled with sandwiches, fruits, drinks, cakes, candies) and their NVC tags, the girls wandered around the tower in awe. They lingered in the Norman Windows where they imagined prisoners of old who languished in the very same room they were in now.

One of the things I immediately liked about London was the transport system. It was easy to go around places by tube (subway). Monique made sure we were armed with passes all the time, and this came with a map of all train stops.

That night, the girls were treated to their very first West End production—the preview presentation of "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" at the London Palladium. This was only the beginning. Afterward, we would be in the theater almost every other day, racking up a total of 14 shows by month's end.

TRYING out costumes at Royal Shakespeare Theatre and Museum at Stratford-Upon-Avon

Show after show

We saw "South Pacific" at the National Theatre (and got the chance to join the cast backstage, thanks to our very own Sheila Francisco, who played Bloody Mary), "Shockheaded Peter," "Fame," "My Fair Lady" at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane (Monique's "home" during her "Miss Saigon" days and now featuring Jonathan Pryce as Professor Higgins), "Stomp," "Woman in Black," "The Phantom of the Opera," "A Midsummer Night's Dream" by the Royal Shakespeare Company, "The Lion King" (we enjoyed the costumes, props and puppets up close, thanks to the backstage tour given by Gia Macuja), "Les Miserables," "Night of a Thousand Voices" at the Royal Albert Hall (featuring the multiawarded lyrics of Tim Rice), "Chicago," and "An Inspector Calls." Whew!

In-between watching all these shows, we toured the city and saw practically all the famous London landmarks via the ubiquitous double-decker bus and the ferry along the Thames River. We also visited the British Museum, Imperial War Museum, Theatre Museum and London Dungeon.

"STAGEMOM" with Hannah at Windsor Castle

Weekend lessons

We had three weekends spent out of town. The kids were kids again at Legoland. They transformed into *kilig* teens at Eton as we passed by the famous school for boys. They were looking for Prince Harry! During the Windsor Castle tour, they had the crazy idea that Princes William and Harry would suddenly show up.

At Stratford-Upon-Avon, we went to the house where Shakespeare was born. The kids had a blast trying out costumes at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and Museum. They also enjoyed the boat ride at the River Avon. It was at Avon where shopping was at its best, what with all the quaint shops and bookstores.

On weekends the kids took up dance, acting and voice lessons at the Centrestage School for Performing Arts. Because the instructors were so impressed with them, they regretted the fact that the kids couldn't stay longer. Later, my daughter would be so thrilled to read the credits for "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets." The actors in the movie trained in the same school!

Aside from lessons at Centrestage, Monique hired two teachers for improvisation classes: Lourdes Faberes, a Filipina actress in London, and Charles Shrivell, author of "100+1 Improvisation Ideas," a famous theater book.

Of course, the kids also got to perform with Monique. They had a mini-concert at JP Morgan Chase and for our *kababayans* at the Center for Filipinos. How proud I was of "my" children!

Hard work

It might sound like it was all just fun, but it wasn't. You should see what they had to accomplish after every activity, whether after a play, a tour, a class, a video showing or after an interaction with Filipino youths living in the UK. Monique would give them feedback sheets with matching deadlines. These would all form part of the Library at the NVC Actor's Studio.

They would have meetings where they discussed activities, assessed and critiqued the shows and classes, and sometimes got reprimands for things they did wrong. Monique was a disciplinarian in a loving sort of way. Rossana and I looked after the kids, but Monique was definitely the authority.

There are other countless memories I will keep forever. The girls' crying session triggered by a hug I gave my daughter—later cured by a shopping spree. The household chores we had to divide among ourselves. The live singing I would hear everywhere and anytime around the flat. Dozens of shoes lined up in the hall.

The girls reading their souvenir programmes on the tube after a show and listening to them discuss what they liked best about it. Their excitement when they received texts or e-mails from their parents and friends (read: crushes) and the disappointment when they did not. Their good upbringing, as I saw the love they had for their family when they shopped for *pasalubongs* despite the tight budget they had.

The hospitality of Filipino friends who sometimes cooked for us or brought food. The shrieks of the kids as they clambered up the lions at Trafalgar Square.

Their smiles as they posed beside Paddington Bear and Sherlock Holmes at Baker Street. The artist in them as they watched the street actors.

And the winner is...

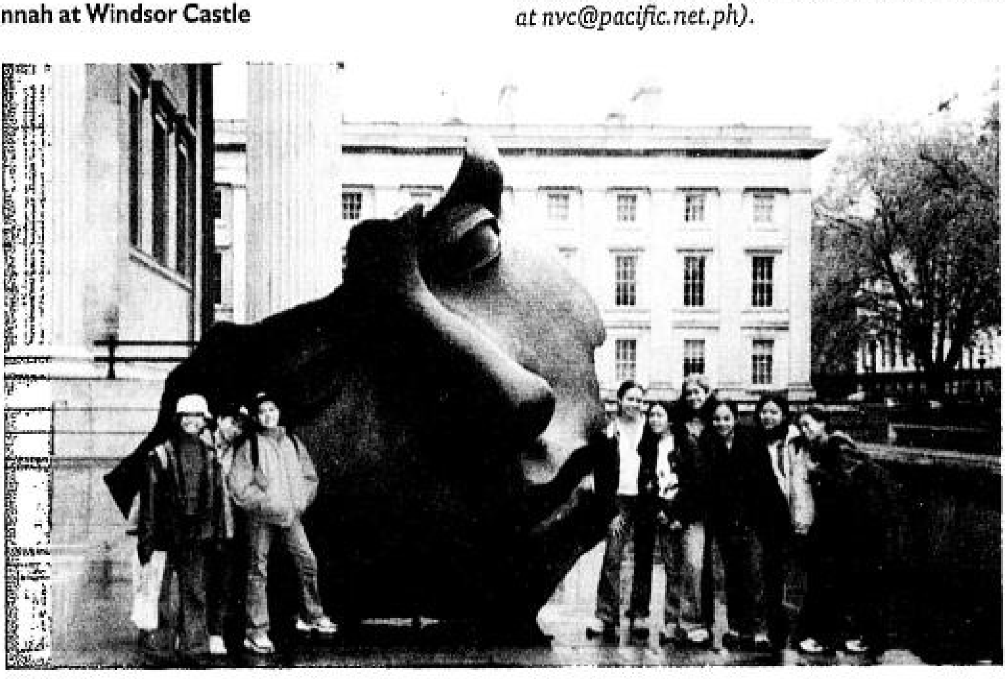
When it was almost time to go home, all the girls received individual awards from Monique and Rossana—for "most disciplined," "best improved dishwasher," "best reader," "most hardworking," etc. I received a going-home present as well. But the ones who should really get awards are Monique and Rossana.

I remember during one presscon for V-Day when Ms Zeneida Amador said she was proud of Monique for putting up the show and for the causes she fought for. The PTA is grateful that Monique continues to share her time, talent and resources with young artists. The Theatre Exposure Trip gave our children the chance to bloom, and a summer experience they will always hold dear.

And if this story is one year late (NVC has had a major musical, numerous "Vagina Monologues" repeat runs, and V-Day 2003 since this trip), it is because Monique is so humble. It is the PTA that wants to brag a little and can't wait till NVC officially talks about it. Blame it on us then. What are we stage parents for?

NVC is currently accepting enrollees for their summer theater workshop. Classes for Acting for Teens and Adults, and Singing for Kids and Teens are still open. Call the NVC Actors Studio at 896-6695, 896-5497, 899-0630 or e-mail at nvc@pacific.net.ph).

WITH *kababayans* in London after a show at the Center for Filipinos


OUTSIDE the British Museum—NVC kids (from left): Hannah, Danielle, Roseanne, Jasmin, Ronalou, Nikki, April, China and Denise

Festival honors 1st Filipina violin virtuoso

THE FORMER students of Prof. Rizalina Buenaventura, in cooperation with Equitable PCI Bank and MCO Foundation, present an afternoon of violin music celebrating the 85th birth anniversary of the Philippines' first woman violin virtuoso. The concert will be held at Francisco Santiago Hall on June 1, 4 p.m., and is free to the public.

The concert repertoire includes Mozart's "Divertimento No. 1" and "String Quartet" pieces to be performed by the Imperial, Molina and Buenaventura families.

Rachmaninov's "Vocalise" and Kreisler's "Liebesfreud" will be rendered by Reginald Pineda and Ravel's "Sonate Posthume 1897" will be played by Ariel and Gigi Arambulo.

Daughter Lourdes Buenaventura Salipsip and grandchildren Michael and Regina Buenaventura will perform their grandfather's trio, "Love's Embrace."

The highlight of the concert will be Bach's "Concerto for Two Violins and String Orchestra," a masterpiece known to be popularized in the Philippines by duo violinists Ernesto Vallejo and Rizalina Exconde.

Call 0918-5583262 and 725-2268. Francisco Santiago Hall is located at Equitable PCI Bank Tower I, Makati Avenue, Makati City.

THE YOUNG Rizalina Buenaventura with Dr. Francisco Santiago at the UP Orchestra

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2. *The Money Transfer Control Number (MTCN) found in every "Receive" transaction will serve as an official entry to the computer-generated raffle draw. Forms containing the MTCN will serve as proof of transaction. No need to fill out any raffle stub or ticket.*
3. *Promo Period: June 1 - August 31, 2003 (3 months)*
4. *The drawing of winners will be computer generated. There will be one (1) grand draw to be held on September 11, 2003 and will be televised over a popular noontime TV variety show, "Eat Bulaga".*
5. *A total of 20 winners will be drawn for the entire promotional period. Draws will be conducted in the presence of a DTI representative, Western Union representative, representatives from the 4 direct agents, and representatives from Jimenez D'Arcy.*
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8. *Winners shall be asked to present their "To Receive" forms bearing the corresponding Money Transfer Control Number (MTCN) plus any of the following identification papers (School ID, passport, driver's license, or any valid ID with picture).*
9. *Draws will be televised over a popular noontime TV variety show: "Eat Bulaga". Winners' names will be announced via print ads and will be notified by registered mail as to where they can claim the prize. Prizes can be claimed within 60 days from notification. GMA winners can claim their prize at the Western Union Country Office, 38 Floor PhilamLife Bldg., Paseo De Roxas, Makati City at telephone number: 8140527. For provincial winners, prizes can be claimed at the nearest Promo Edge Corporation office specified in the registered notice. Prizes not claimed within the given period will be forfeited in favor of Western Union with prior approval of DTI.*
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Fil-Am sensation

From page E1

there."

Of all the candidates for the position, Castillo is the most experienced and the most exciting.

His credential with the Camella Orchestra and now his exposure to the National Symphony make him the most qualified for the top PPO post.

Before his National Symphony debut, he actually spent weeks in residency with the orchestra to observe and study the musical and business side of running an orchestra.

Two others were in that residency, but it was Castillo who got the attention of the Washington press.

Before his formal music training, Castillo dreamed of becoming a conductor when he saw on television Leonard Bernstein hosting a concert for young people. He had also seen Bugs Bunny conducting Pavarotti, and he told himself he would be conductor someday.

"I actually grew up listening to the three B's—Bach, Beethoven and the Beatles," he said.

Conducting the PPO for the first time will be another enormous challenge for this Filipino-American.

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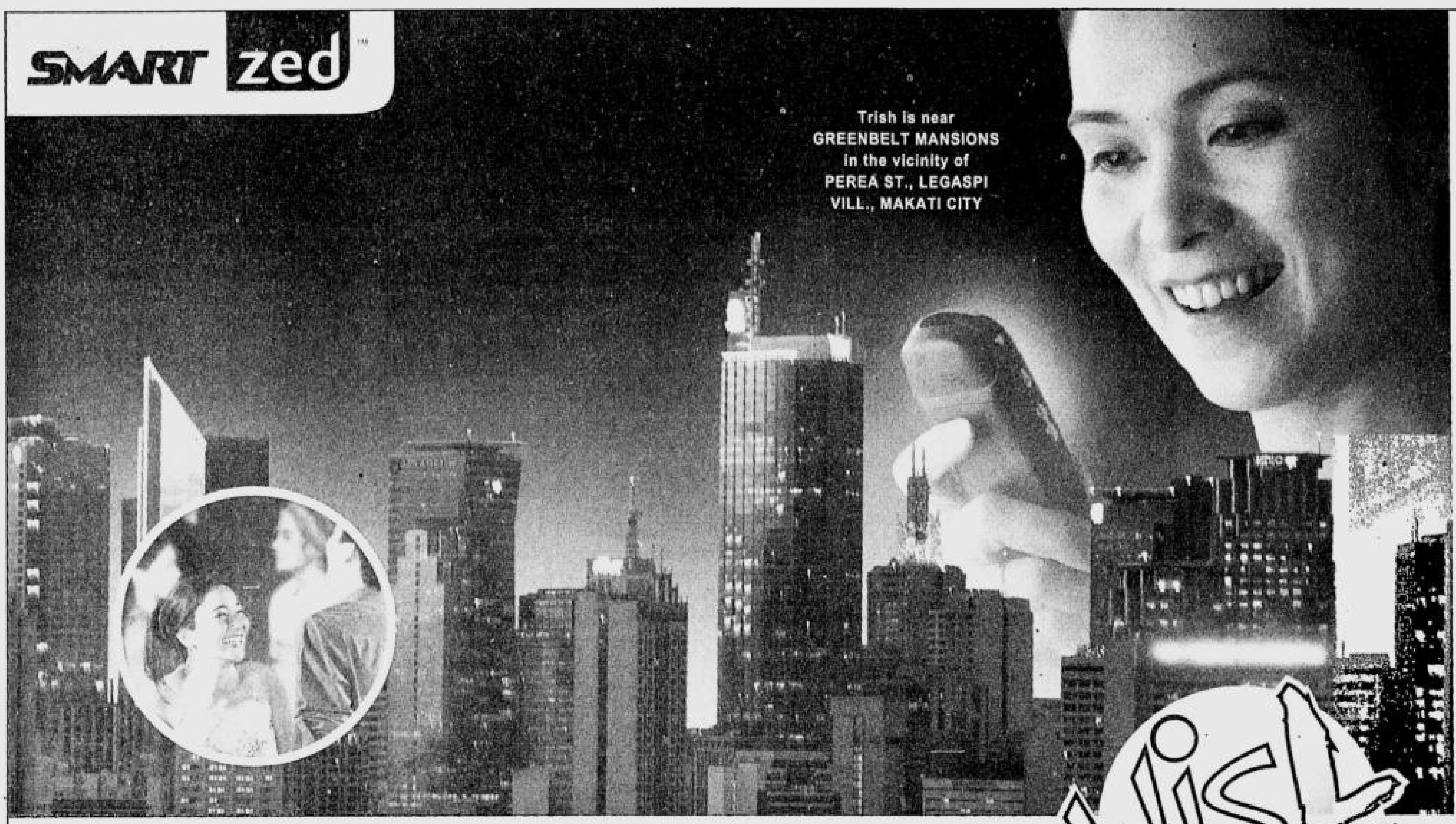

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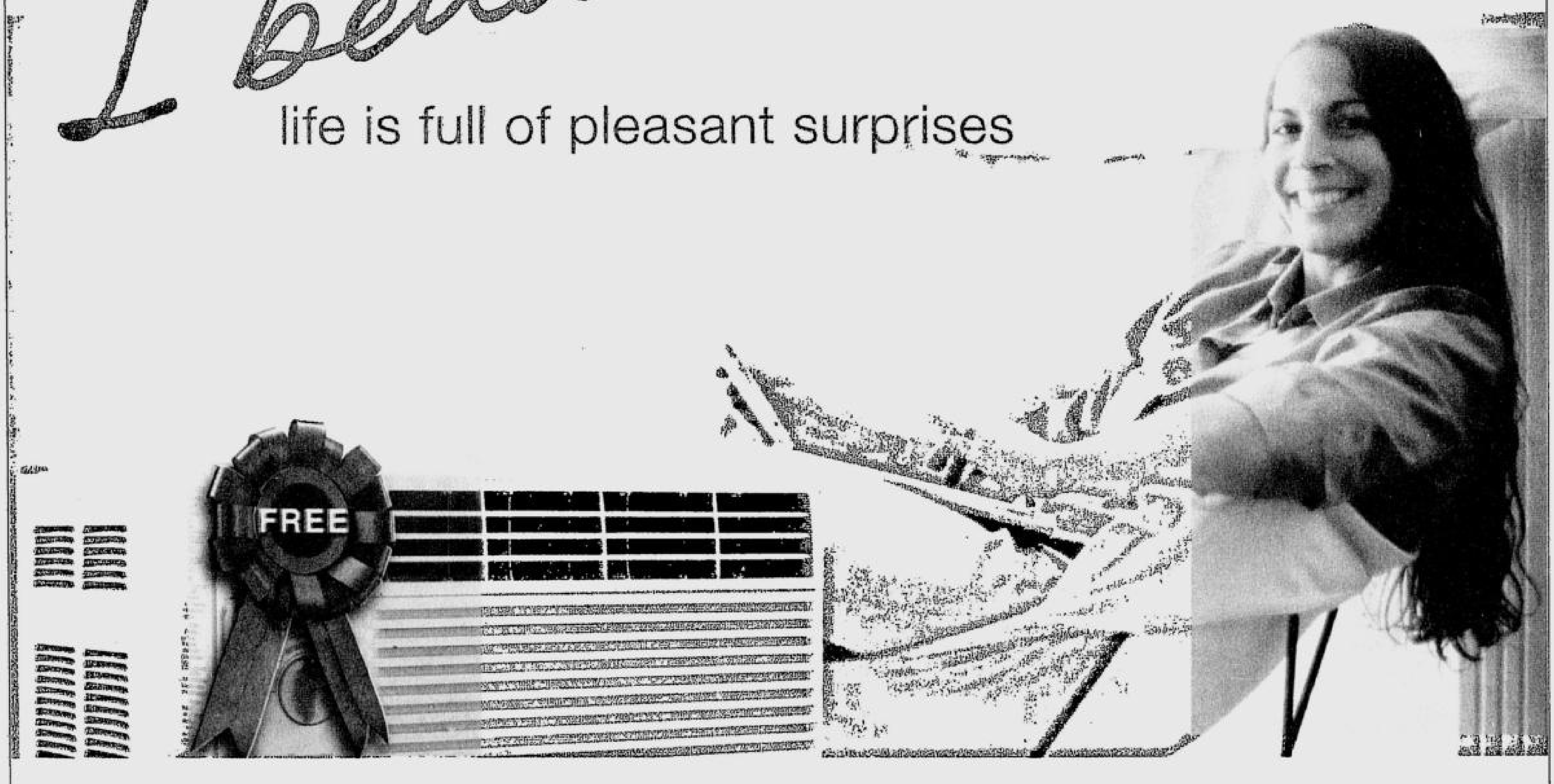

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PREHISTORIC CAVES, ROCKSHELTERS AND OTHER ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES IN BOHOL

BOHOL public school teachers go on a mission to study their province's museums.

Teaching teachers how to love a museum

By John L. Silva
Contributor

BOHOL Baclayon Church's parking lot was full of tourist buses on that hot April day. The Koreans and Manila tourists were all over the adjacent museum and inside the church admiring the ceiling paintings. Two more buses drove into the parking lot, and more tourists, almost all women, alighted, eagerly following their historian guide Marianito Luspo.

These 85 smiling, camera-toting tourists were extra-special. They were Bohol public-school teachers on a mission to study their province's museums, historical monuments and heritage houses.

Funded by the Ford Foundation with its new local educational reform program called Synergeia and administered by the Philippine National Museum Foundation, the majority of these teachers would visit and learn about, in the one-day field trip, Baclayon Church and Museum, Loboc Church and Museum, the Church of the Most Blessed Holy Trinity in Loay, the Bohol Museum, and the Clarin ancestral house.

Added to this rigorous schedule was a dramatic play on the looting of church objects, a church organ rendition, a musical presentation by the internationally renowned Loboc Children's Choir, and, to rest their tired museum feet, a leisurely lunch on dining boats up and down the pristine Loboc River.

The "I Love Museum" program, now on its second year of Ford funding, has a simple belief, espoused by Synergeia, that the country's 16-million schoolchildren can also learn, become literate, and develop a liberal arts orientation outside classroom walls. With over 200 public and private museums in this country, most of them underutilized but chockfull of their nation's past and treasures, the "I Love Museum" program has set out to teach teachers all the wonderful things that are in their local museums, and learn how to share that information with their students.

First time

Not surprisingly, most of the teachers coming from 80 of the 120 public high schools throughout the province had never been to their own museums. For

TEACHING/ F2

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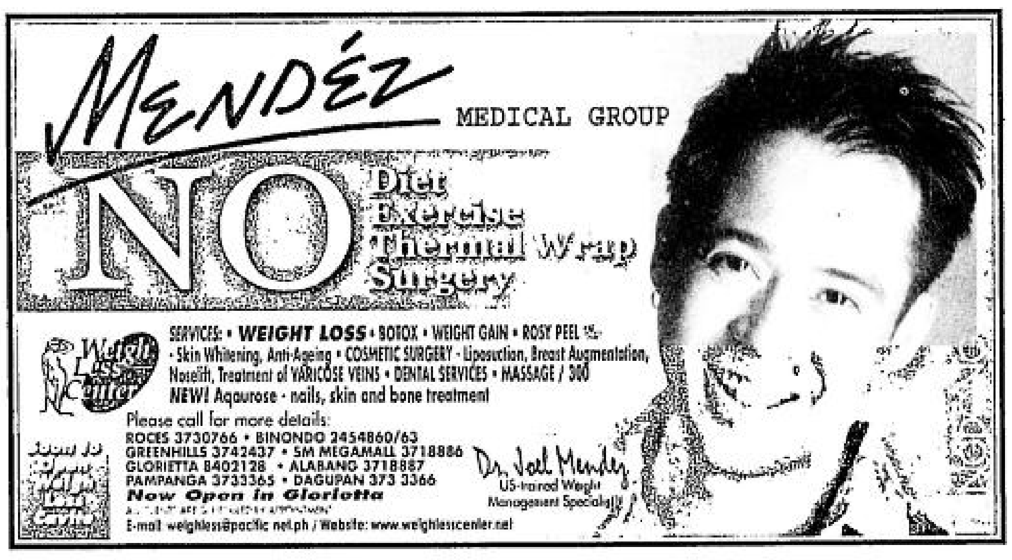
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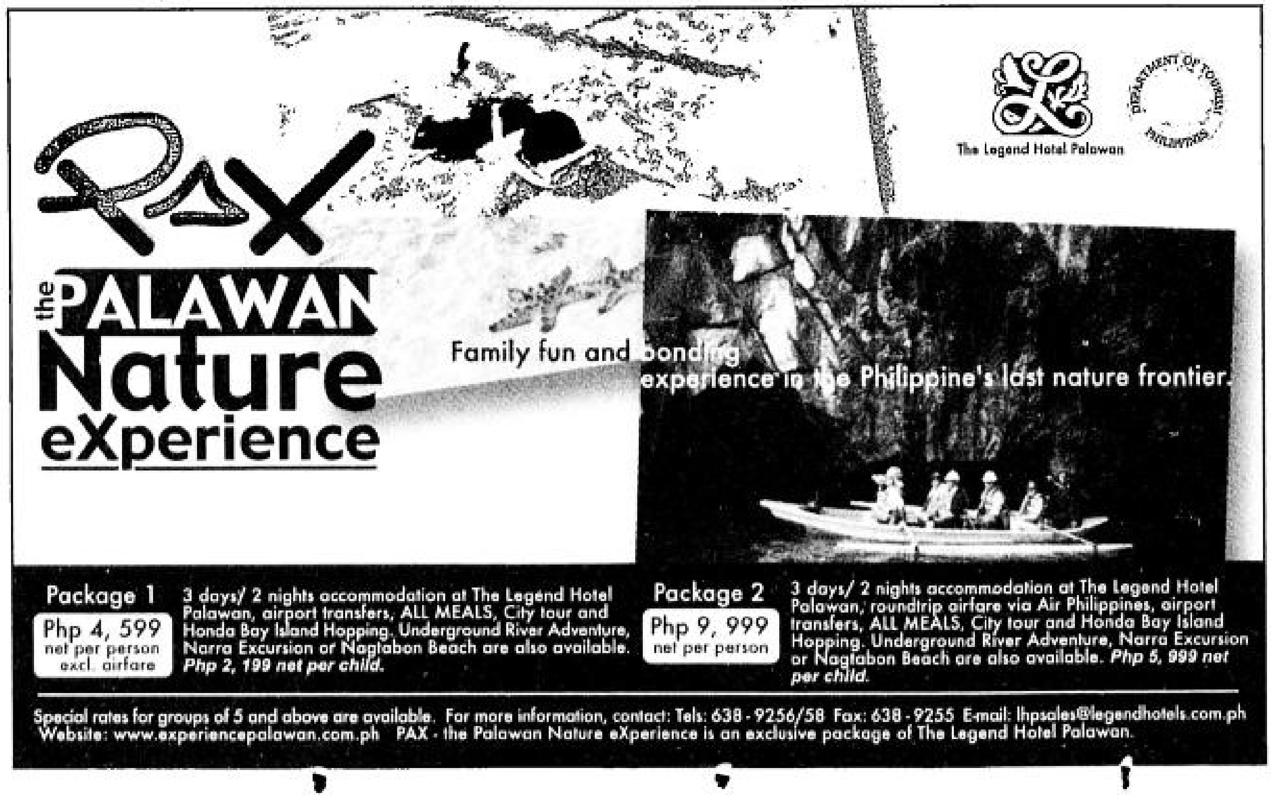
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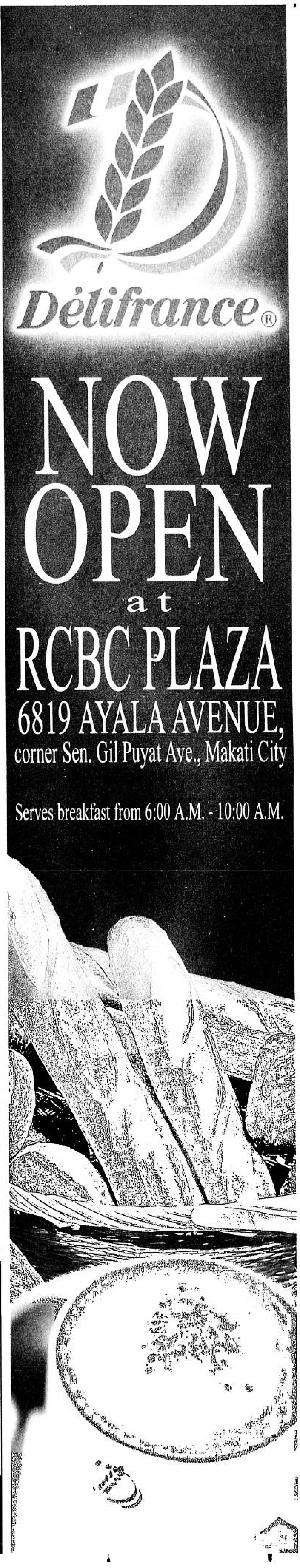
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Teaching teachers how to love a museum

From page F1

all of the teachers, their visit to the Clarin ancestral house would be their very first time to set foot in a house museum.

The teachers started early morning gathering at Bohol Museum, the family home of former President Garcia. They wandered through the two-story building inspecting ancient posts from the Dapitan kingdom and the family pictures of President Garcia in the bedroom galleries upstairs.

Marianito, the Holy Name University's director for cultural affairs, would make sure they started the day's trip with a full understanding of Bohol history by presenting a timeline on historical highlights, from pre-Spanish all the way to the present. He was delightfully entertaining as he punctuated his scholarly Boholano discourse with quips, insights and local lore that had everyone in stitches so early in the day.

Marianito was exercising the program's credo: Make history learning enjoyable to teachers and this will, in turn, rub off on their students.

Boarding the two buses, they headed off to Baclayon, the oldest fortress church ever built in the province. They all made a beeline to the *convento* and walked on 100-year-old creaking planks of wood, to gaze and reflect on the remaining ecclesiastical urns, ivory figures, church vestments, books and reliquaries.

The group moved to the church where they sat on the pews and were treated to a Powerpoint presentation on the grandeur of museums throughout the world, like the Metropolitan Museum of New York, the Vatican Museum, the Louvre, the National Museum of the Philippines and their very own Baclayon Church Museum.

A lecture I gave extolled the values of museums to students, how they spark wonderment, inquiry and a zest for learning and understanding. The teachers were encouraged to take an adventure trip with their students to museums and not feel inadequate about not knowing everything in a museum. For nobody does. What mattered more was that they were there with their students, instigating the desire to know, investigate, and be satisfied with the mystery of discovering.

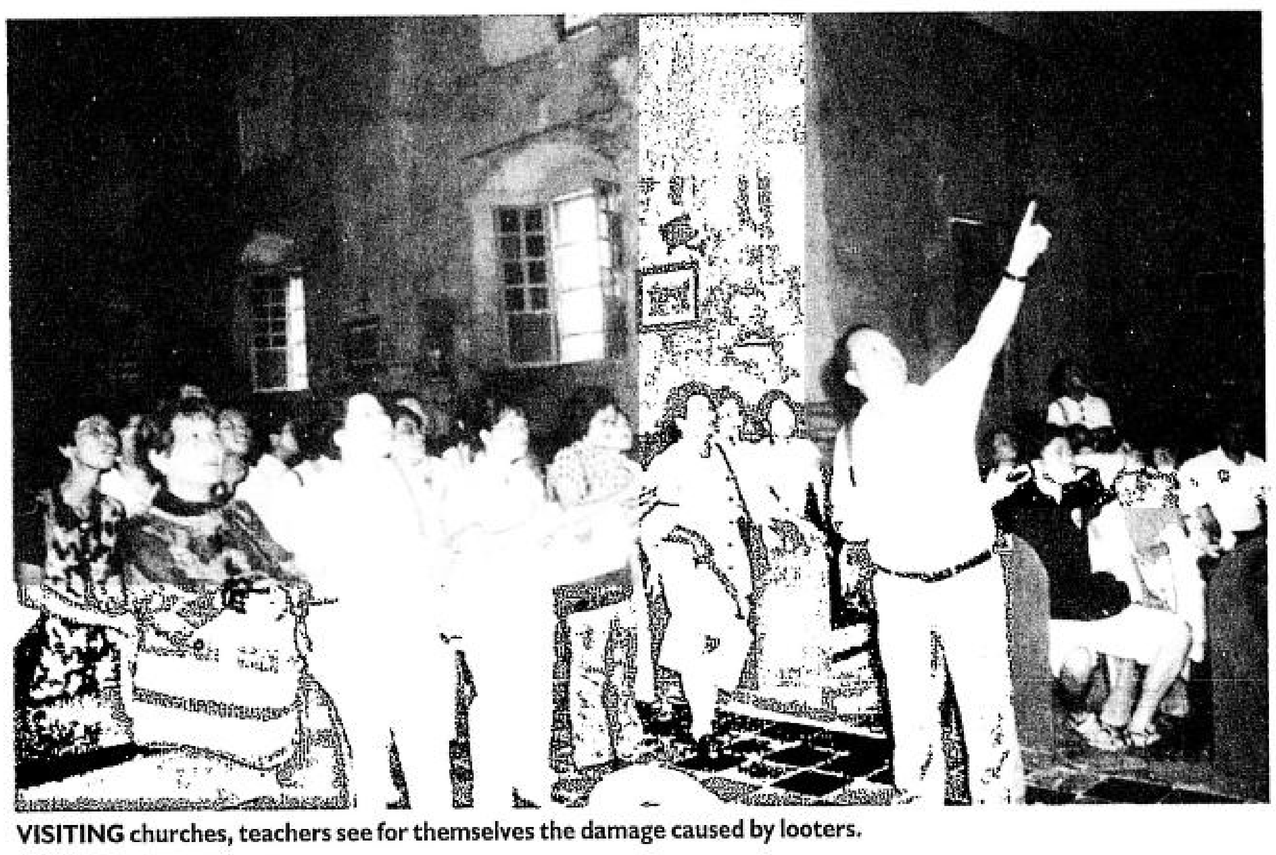
Beautiful country

The Clarin ancestral house was their next stop. The teachers wound their way through the well-preserved home of a distinguished Bohol family, admiring the décor and lifestyle of an early 20th-century house, finding clues on the formation of *ilustrados* and the development of patriotic culture.

At nearby Loay Church, the teachers got visual respite and closed their eyes to listen to the most divine organ music played by Enriqueta Butalid, wife of the province's former Gov. Rolando Butalid. Spry and ever smiling as she pounded the keyboard, her exalting notes pierced the centuries-old church interior, transporting the teachers into another time when music created reverie and inspired noble thoughts.

It was time for lunch and everyone was bussed to Loboc River, where they boarded flat boats outfitted with dining tables. While feasting on their lunch, the teachers were slowly motored up the river to the nearby falls, allowing them to admire its current pristine state and reminding them of the fragility of their ecosystem.

As the boats meandered and the teachers became mesmerized by the river scene and foliage around them, a few tearfully commented how they had never been given before this opportunity of seeing their beautiful country and the treasures in their museum.



VISITING churches, teachers see for themselves the damage caused by looters.

LUNCH and cruise along Loboc River are de rigueur in any tourist's itinerary.

LOBOC church as seen from a river craft

TEACHERS find clues on the development of patriotic culture in the well-preserved Clarin ancestral house.

> The 'I Love Museum' program makes history learning enjoyable to educators so they can share that enthusiasm with their students

One teacher recounted how she left her Northern town of Talibon at 3 in the morning to be able to reach the meeting point in Tagbilaran for the registration. Slightly tired but sporting a satisfied grin, she thought the sleepless morning ride was well worth what she was seeing that day.

It wasn't over yet, though. Upon disembarking, they headed for the nearby Loboc Church Museum, where in the sacristy, a play by Teatro Bol-Anon was performed. It dwells on exaggerated characters of a Manila antiques dealer who periodically bribes a local church worker to steal an artifact so she can sell it. The play optimistically ends with the remorseful worker finally declining the offer. The very clear message for the teachers and their students was that church objects were national treasures and not private adornments for sleazy collectors.

Righteous anger

It was Fr. Ted Torralba's turn with the teachers. An esteemed church historian who headed the National Commission for Culture and the Arts Committee on Monuments and Sites, Fr. Ted led the teachers on a systematic tour of Loboc Church, starting from the front entrance, noting the church's physical prominence in the town planning of Spanish colonialists, all the way to the front of the church and the symbolism of every aspect of the altar and the ensconced religious figurines.

It was a veritable tour-de-force, with the serious, note-taking teachers learning the most extensive understanding of church history they had ever received. One teacher remarked that she became a more learned and devout Catholic after going through Fr. Ted's engaging lecture.

As they sat on the front pews of the church, many were drawn to three empty niches on a side altar. There once stood three religious saints. But just barely a month earlier, looters broke into the church, decapitated the ivory heads and hands, and ran off in the night.

Given what they had learned that day, the teachers had a lot more righteous anger and resolve to make sure that such thievery would not continue in their province.

To cap the information overload of the day, the teachers retired to the *convento* for a delightful *merienda* and the dulcet performance of the Loboc Children's Choir. Anyone who's heard these voices of angels can only shed copious tears of joy.

The teachers had never heard them sing in concert before. A few had seen them only on television. Now they were as enraptured as the thousands of tourists and international audiences who had witnessed the choir's performance. This musical treat may have been the biggest of treats for these teachers who get scant recognition for the important work they do to the country.

The performance was the closing challenge to teachers. Gardy Labad, the principal Bohol coordinator of the whole day's program and cultural czar of the province, noted that the discipline and the excellence in the children's singing could have only been produced by the choir's inspiring teacher, Alma Fernando Taldo.

With thunderous applause and catcalls for "More!" the teachers paid homage to the students and to their own colleague. Primed throughout the day, they were eager to follow in Ms Taldo's footsteps.

This was just one province with just one group of teachers who've been immersed in their very first cultural appreciation program. The "I Love Museum" program will be conducted in the next three years in many more municipalities and provinces, thanks to the Ford Foundation and Synergeia.

The local museums that participated in the first year have reported dramatic increases in museum field visits led by eager and enthusiastic teachers who took the course. Children who know their past and have an abiding respect for it will truly be, as national hero Jose Rizal has written, the future hope of the country. And teachers taught to unlock its past and revel in it will be our children's guides.

For more information on the "I Love Museum" Program, contact John L. Silva at jsilva79@hotmail.com, or 527-5082 at the National Museum of the Philippines.

John L. Silva is the senior consultant for the National Museum and is on the board of directors of Synergeia, a national educational reform organization.

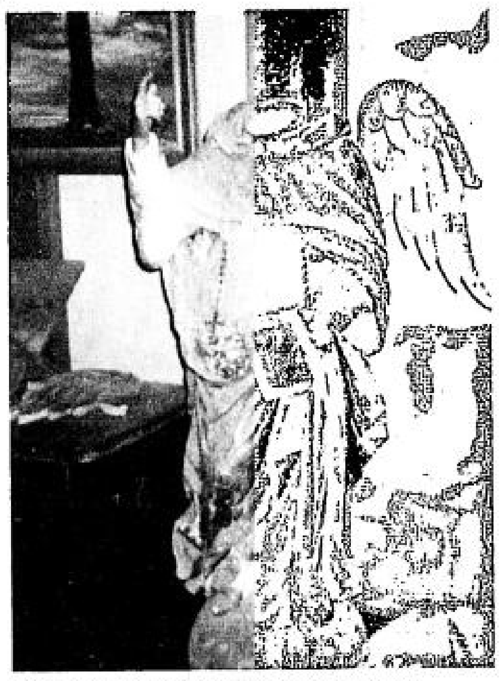


IMAGE of San Vicente Ferrer has been stripped of its ivory head by looters.

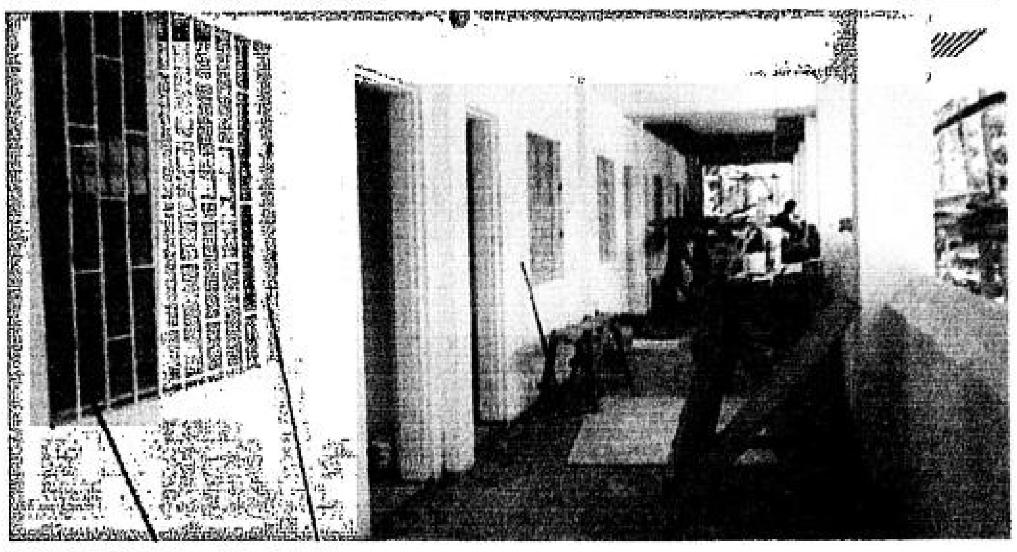
It's Brigada Eskwela Week!

NASSA executive secretary Sr. Rosanne Mallillin welcomes FWWPP president Dr. Maria Lim Ayuyao.

From page F4

soon. However, they still need technical assistance and courseware training for their teachers.

We're calling on IT groups (can you hear us, www.connect.ed.ph?) that would like to help Mayor Joji Ilio put the Bulabud Elementary School on the information highway to get in touch with us, the sooner the better.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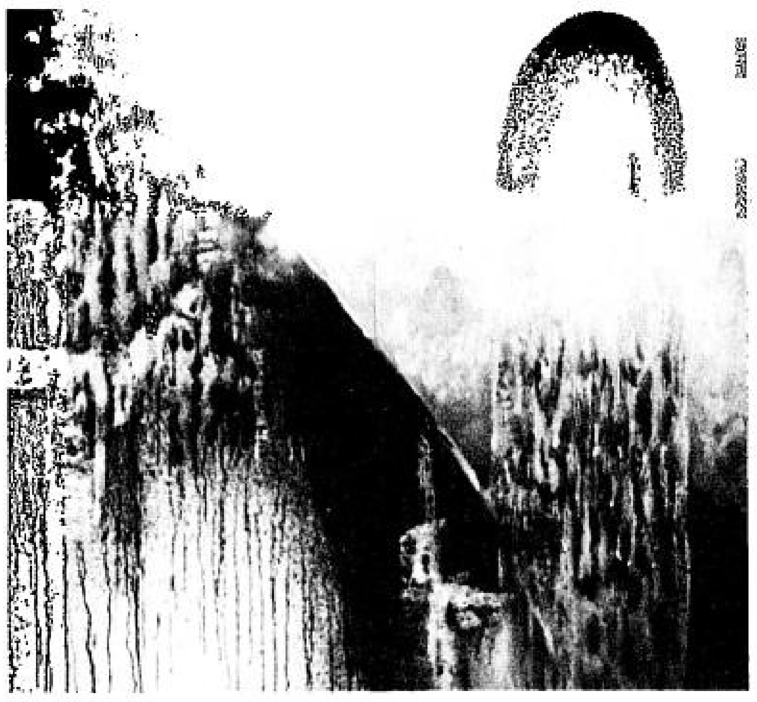
"WHAT You See Is Not What You Think" by Butch Payawal

Payawal's 'inventive, shocking' art at Galerie Astra

ARTIST Butch Payawal, known for works that are described as "inventive, humorous and at times mildly shocking," will have an exhibit of his latest works on May 23 to June 8 at the Galerie Astra in Makati City.

The show, titled "Satisfied Mind," is an attempt to tackle humanity's contradictory desires for peace and conflict. Payawal's works display his unpredictability, a quality that has won him many patrons. As one critic notes, Payawal has made stylelessness a distinct adjunct to his medium.

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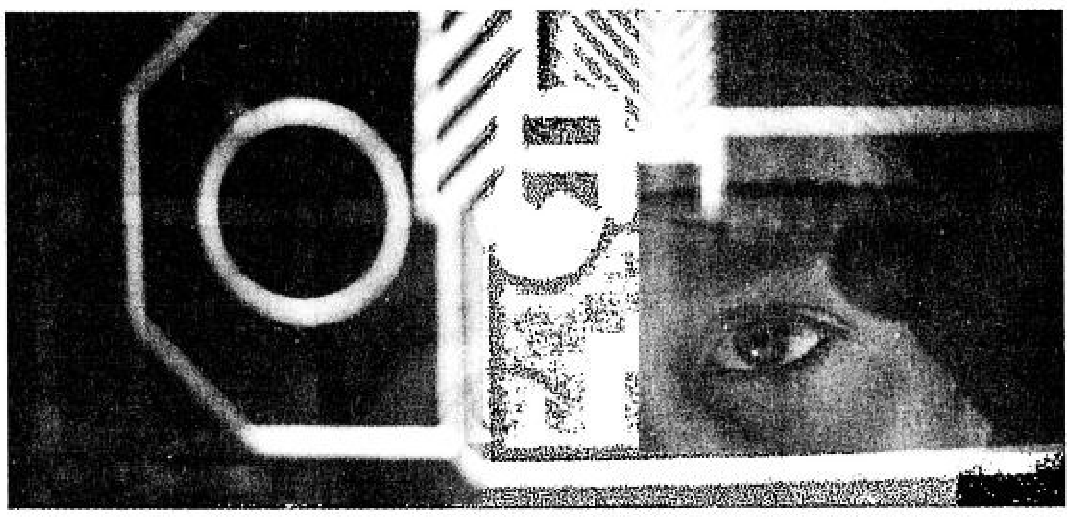

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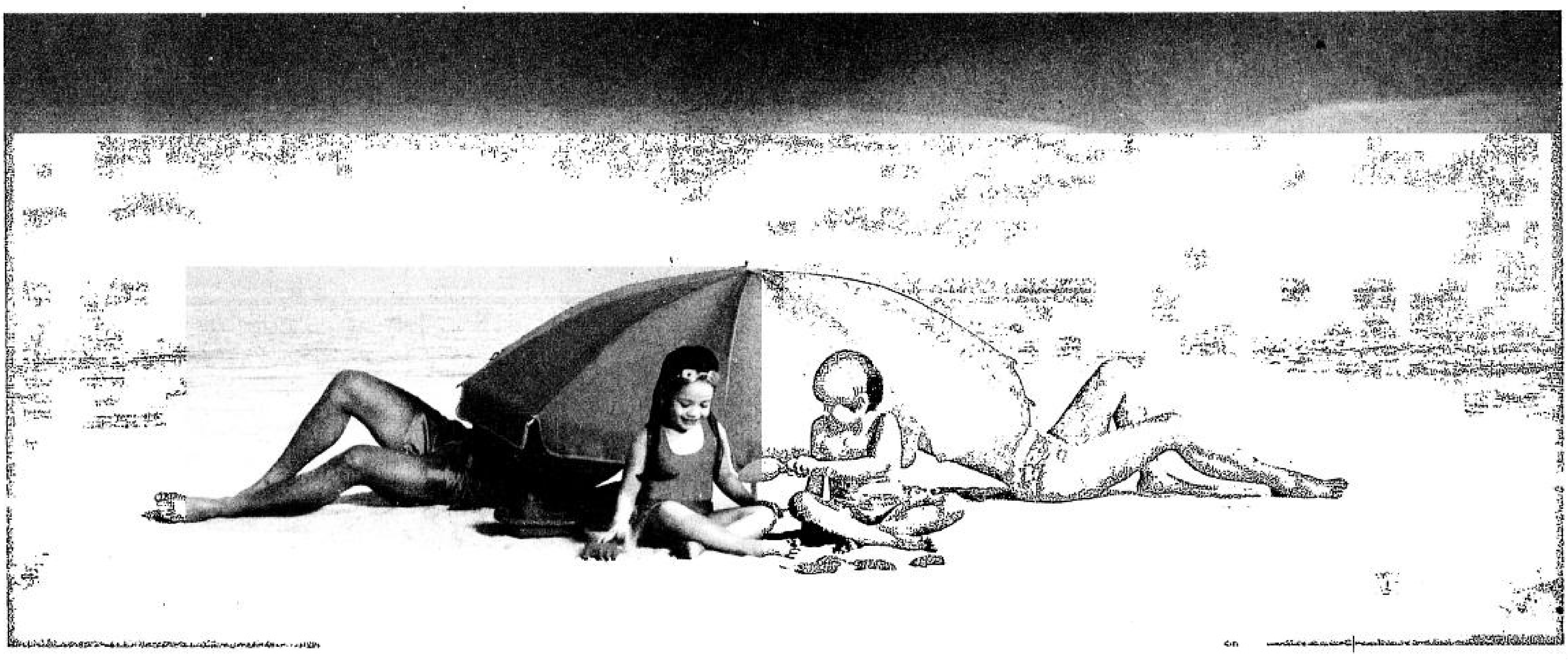

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Per DTI-Cebu Permit No.187 Series of 2003.

EDUCATION REVOLUTION

It's Brigada Eskwela Week!

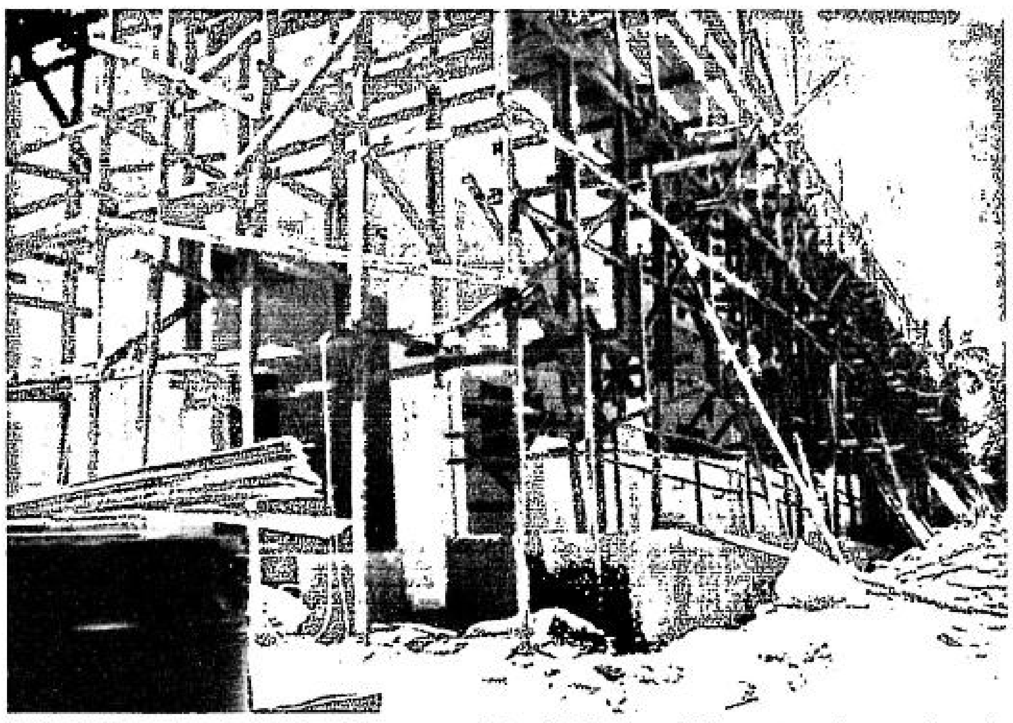
The campaign for better public education is attracting more converts across the country

FWWPP president Dr. Maria Lim Ayuyao

By Butch Hernandez
Contributor

STARTING today until Friday, May 23, parents, local civic organizations, church groups, barangay councils and concerned individuals—collectively called Brigada Eskwela—will troop to public elementary and secondary schools all across the country to paint roofs, fix water pipes, repair doors and windows and make minor repairs to get these schools ready for the opening of classes in June.

DepEd Undersecretary Juan Miguel Luz said that the local communities of 7,599 elementary schools and 1,519 high schools have signed up for Brigada Eskwela, which highlights the Department of Education's National Schools Maintenance Week.



BUILDING project for Bulabud Elementary School in Malinao, Aklan, gets underway through the efforts of Mayor Joji Ilio.

Through Brigada Eskwela, the Department of Education hopes to strengthen the local community's participation in public education.

Incidentally, while preparing the visuals for his thesis at the UP College of Fine Arts, Mannix Abrera, assisted by his father, master cartoonist Jess Abrera, saw how badly the public schools needed help.

Jess Abrera subsequently made the artwork for the Brigada Eskwela ad while Mannix' thesis—which merited an Award for Excellence—calls on everyone to pitch in to improve our public schools through posters and video.

Example of successful advocacy

FWWPP president Dr. Maria Lim "Butchie" Ayuyao, speaking on behalf of Eggie Apostol, called on participants of the Advocacy Management Training Seminar (AMT) held May 7-9 in Cebu City to "believe in your cause, and believe in your passion and ability to promote that cause, and you will be well on your way to a successful advocacy campaign."

Dr. Ayuyao gave the FWWPP's Education Revolution as a concrete example of an advocacy that has been succeeding because "Mrs. Apostol, myself and everyone else who is involved in it truly believe in it."

Butchie Ayuyao made the presentation livelier by directly interacting with the participants. At one point, she called one participant—whose children were enrolled in a public school—a true Education Revolution advocate.

Eighty-three individuals and 63 diocesan social action centers attended the AMT, which was organized by the National Secretariat for Social Action (Nassa). Ms Apostol was invited to share her experience and expertise in both advocacy and media.

After the presentation, a number of participants and guests took the chance to tell Butchie Ayuyao that they supported the Education Revolution's advocacy for quality education in public schools, as they shared their advocacy experience with her.

Butchie herself was particularly impressed with the community development work being done by Nassa's social action personnel throughout the country.

Mayor for Education Revolution

During the first few days after the formal launch of the Education Revolution, Mayor Joji Ilio of Malinao, Aklan, wrote to tell us that they were about to begin a school-building project for an elementary school in his hometown.

He also said that the school building would house an Information Technology center so that both the pupils and teachers of Bulabud Elementary School would become IT-capable.

Mayor Ilio got in touch with the FWWPP at that time to ask for links to IT groups willing to help him set up the IT center and train the teachers of Bulabud Elementary School.

Today, six months later, Mayor Ilio happily shares with us that they have successfully completed their school-building project and that they expect their computer units to arrive very

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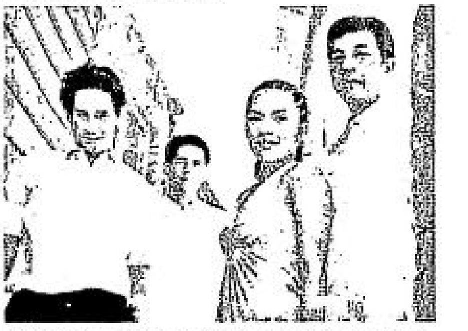

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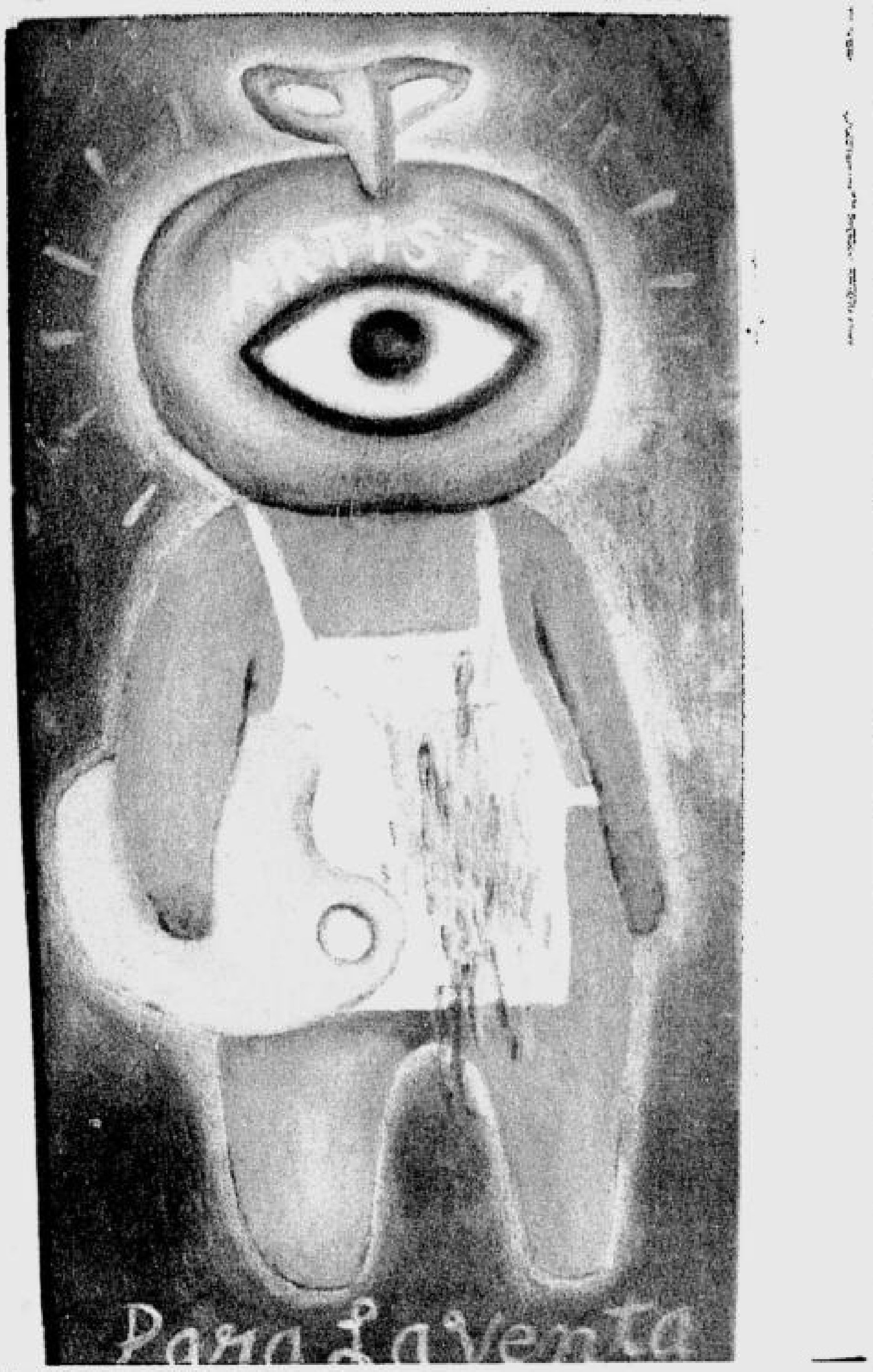
Joaquin Palencia's field of colors p. G2
Mark Justiniano's balancing act p. G4



"ARTIST for Sale"

Here you wait again.

Your client promised he'd be there at 2:30.

And you know it will be more like 4:30. If you are lucky.

Is this how you kill time waiting for a client?

(At the same time your Tokyo client has to have your proposal e-mailed high priority ASAP.)

Portraits of hybrid and crosshatched artists

By Constantino C. Tejero

LIKE the half-human, half-animal figures on his canvases, Andres Barrioquinto may be said to be a hybrid artist. Utilizing the styles and techniques of expressionism and surrealism, incorporating text and the literary devices of allegory and personification, and investing the work with a social realist content, he produces the postmodern.

In his fifth solo show, "Fhamventa Hezpesyal," ongoing until May 20 in West Gallery at Artlane, L/3, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati City, the artist showcases in 10 pieces his edgy art.

This is made edgier by the tension between the exhibit's theme of the selling of art and the artist's struggle not to sell out. What emerge are images teetering between hilarity and horror, sometimes recalling late Picasso, often appearing like a blend of cartoon characters and Egyptian hieroglyphs.

The nauseating imagery belies the playfulness, such as the fanciful spelling of the exhibit's title. (The artist says the spelling is meant to grab the gallery-goer's attention, precisely the marketing strategy he is satirizing about in certain artists.)

"Chemistry Between Us," in ink on paper, has a canine figure face to face with a flattop man in shirt and tie, with the inscriptions *Sikat na Artista, Pendeho* and *Quamada*.

"Dr. Evil's Secret Ingredients," charcoal on paper, portrays what looks like a skeletal canine figure or a bovine skull, and includes a recipe consisting of flour, baking powder, paprika, salt and pepper, and dog. This is funny, though a bit horrific, if the viewer can read between the lines.

"Artist for Sale," oil on canvas, depicts against a blue-green background a simplified human form in orange with a gray apron streaked with ochre and slate. It holds an ochre palette and has a cyclopean eye with cobalt-blue pupil, in a blue-green ovoid, with a brown key on top, surrounded by ochre rays.

The piece is inscribed with *Artista Para la Venta*. Looking like a weird teddy bear, the artist is here depicted as a wound-up toy (of curators, patrons, mentors, gallery-owners).

Artists' savior

"Fhamventa Hezpesyal," oil on canvas, is inscribed with *poner en il pader?* and the title of the piece. Barely perceptible is the outline of a lean human face in ochre, obviously the artist's, which is is obliterated by streaks of white, reddish-brown, yellow.

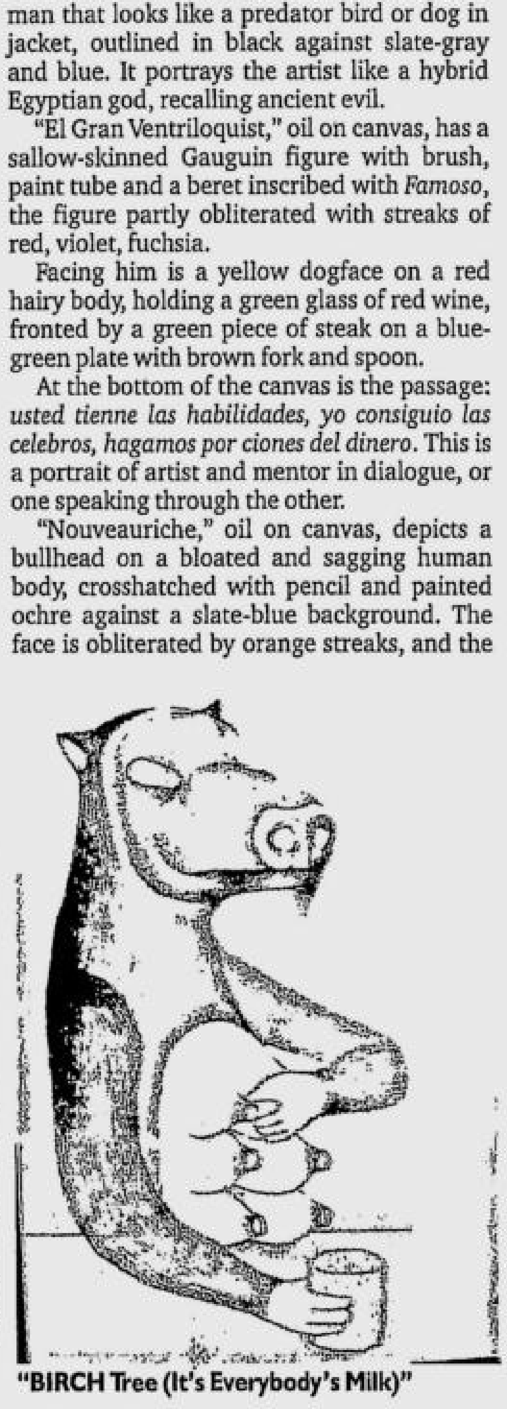
"Quando Morirai," pastel on paper, has a man that looks like a predator bird or dog in jacket, outlined in black against slate-gray and blue. It portrays the artist like a hybrid Egyptian god, recalling ancient evil.

"El Gran Ventriloquist," oil on canvas, has a sallow-skinned Gauguin figure with brush, paint tube and a beret inscribed with *Famoso*, the figure partly obliterated with streaks of red, violet, fuchsia.

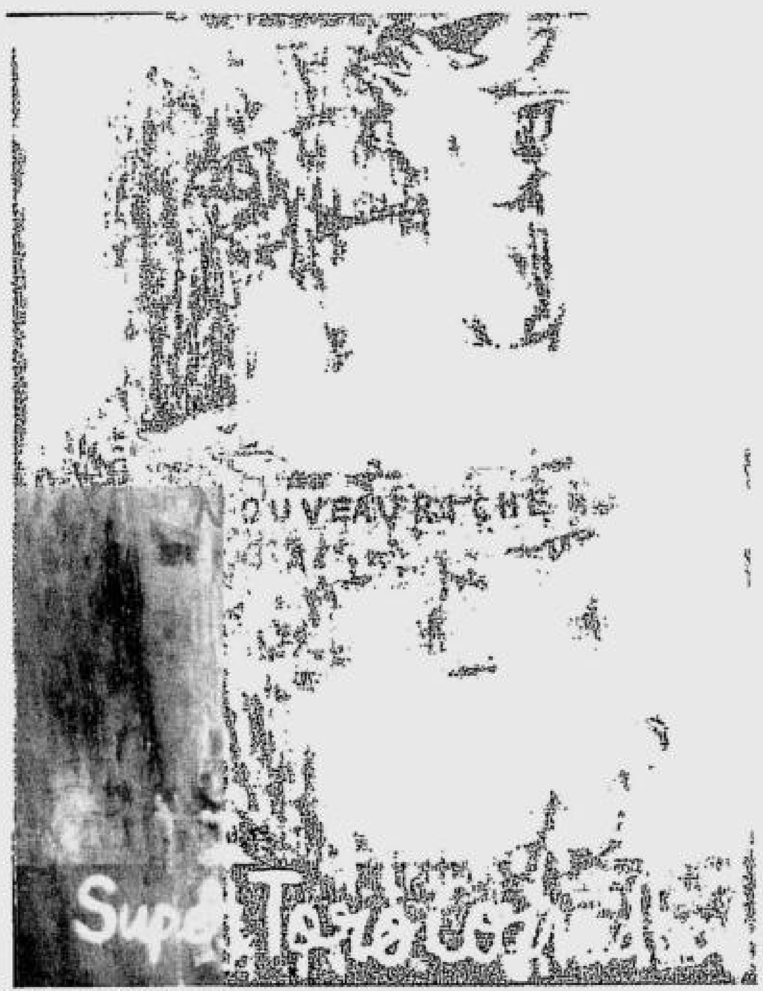
Facing him is a yellow dogface on a red hairy body, holding a green glass of red wine, fronted by a green piece of steak on a blue-green plate with brown fork and spoon.

At the bottom of the canvas is the passage: *usted tienne las habilidades, yo consiguio las celebros, hagamos por ciones del dinero*. This is a portrait of artist and mentor in dialogue, or one speaking through the other.

"Nouveauriche," oil on canvas, depicts a bullhead on a bloated and sagging human body, crosshatched with pencil and painted ochre against a slate-blue background. The face is obliterated by orange streaks, and the figure encircled by what looks like a pen or arena in orange.



"BIRCH Tree (It's Everybody's Milk)"



"NOUVEAURICHE"

At the bottom is the inscription *Super Toro Corned Beef*. Ostensibly a surreal depiction of canned meat, it is really a portrait of the get-rich artist, the go-getter in the art scene.

"Mr. Clean," oil and drawing on canvas, portrays a yellowish baldheaded man with cherub's wings, his sagging body naked but for a tie, and partly obliterated with streaks of brown, black and blue-green. On top is inscribed *Salvador de las Artistas*, which should speak for itself.

"Birch Tree (It's Everybody's Milk)," oil and drawing on canvas, has a gray beast against a beige background. It could be a bear, cow or dog with multiple breasts, squeezing a teat and ostensibly squirting into a glass its milk, which has been obliterated by streaks of blue, black and brown.

This then is a milking cow, so this must be a portrait of the artist as mentor, nourishing younger artists for the wrong reason.

Exemplary artist

"Jeff Buckley," pastel on paper, has an ochre underpaint and a slate-gray overpaint from which emerges a pop portrait of the long-haired musician composed by black crosshatching of pencil and sketchy lines of pastel.

The images of Andres Barrioquinto teeter between hilarity and horror, between late Picasso and Egyptian hieroglyphs

Barrioquinto admits Buckley is his icon, an exemplar of the artist who is not commercialized and never a sellout. Placed at the tail end of the exhibit, his lonely visage seems to be a reproach to the other portraits in the gallery, those commercial artists who hunger for "fame *na madali-in*."

Barrioquinto says his works have been inspired by Buckley's music and lyrics. "*Lahat galing doon*. I listen to him while I work."

What's with the obliteration, though? Is there any meaning to this spoiling of the canvas or marring of the figure?

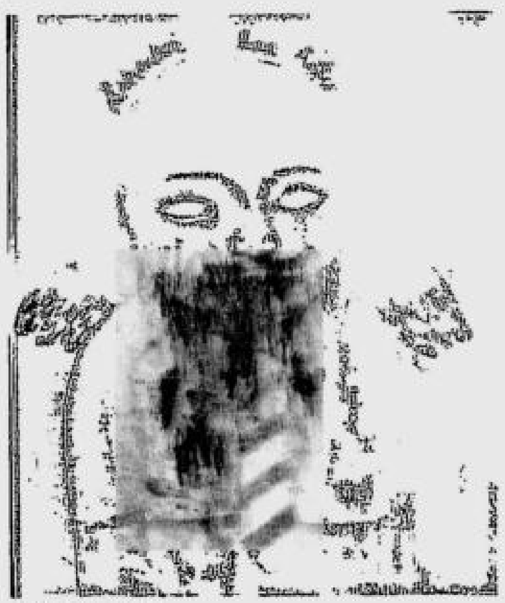
"I just got tired," says the artist. "'*Pag medyo may sira, mas* interesting, *'di ba?*"

Barrioquinto is, in fact, one of the more interesting artists of his generation, and certainly one of the most awarded (prizes from the annual art competitions of Shell, Metrobank and the Art Association of the Philippines; the Jurors' Choice at the Arts Awards-Asia Pacific in Singapore; Best Entry in Lithography from the Print Association of the Philippines; honorable mention in the International Biennial Print and Drawing Exhibition in Taiwan). And he is only 28.

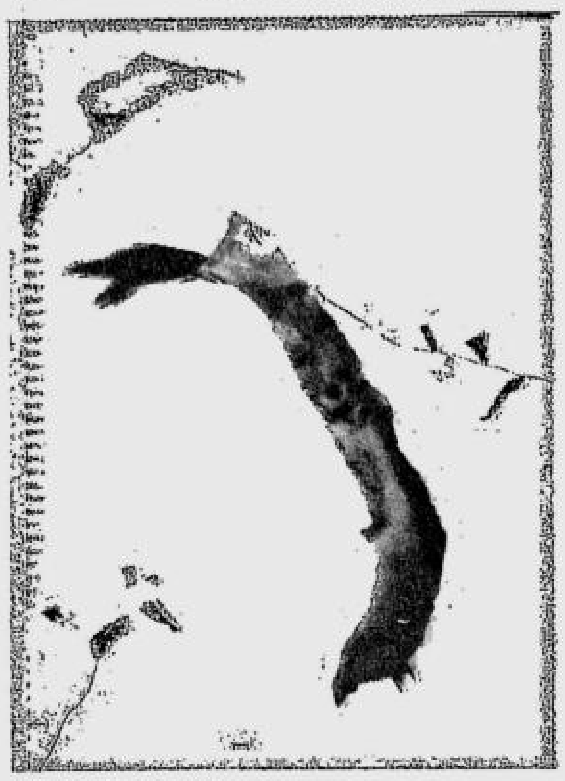
After attending an art workshop at the University of the Philippines, he took up fine arts at the University of Santo Tomas.

Artists he admires include José Legaspi, Manuel Ocampo, Louie Cordero, Charlie Co, Klimt, Munch, Chagall, Francis Bacon, Lucian Freud.

On why he has become an artist, Barrioquinto has an explanation so simple as to be almost mystical: "*Dahil dito lagi ako bumabagsak*. I should be doing other things, but I always fall into this."



"MR. Clean"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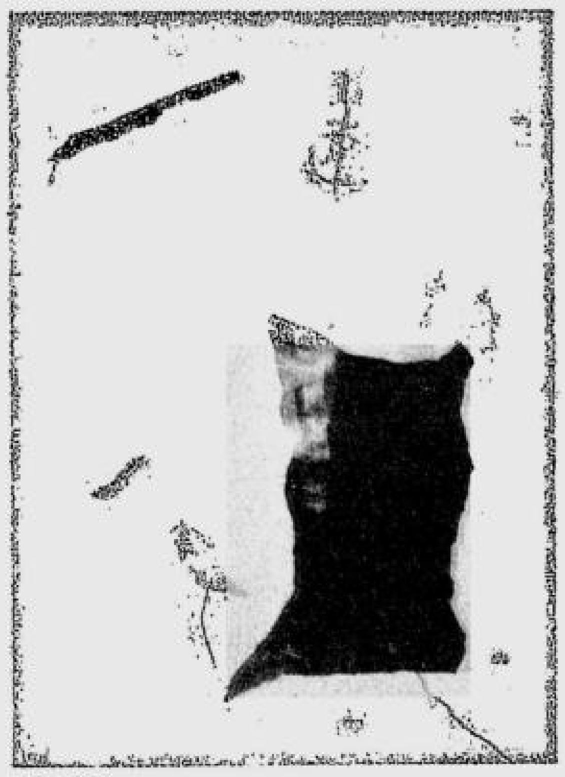
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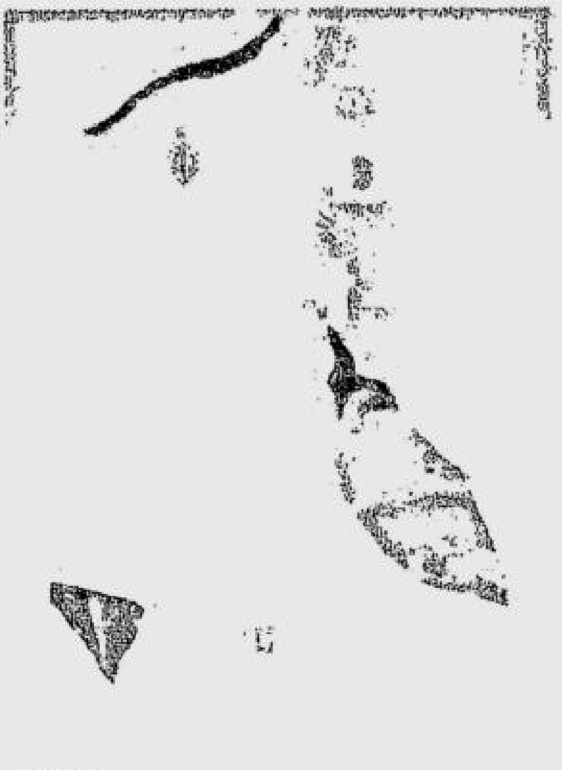
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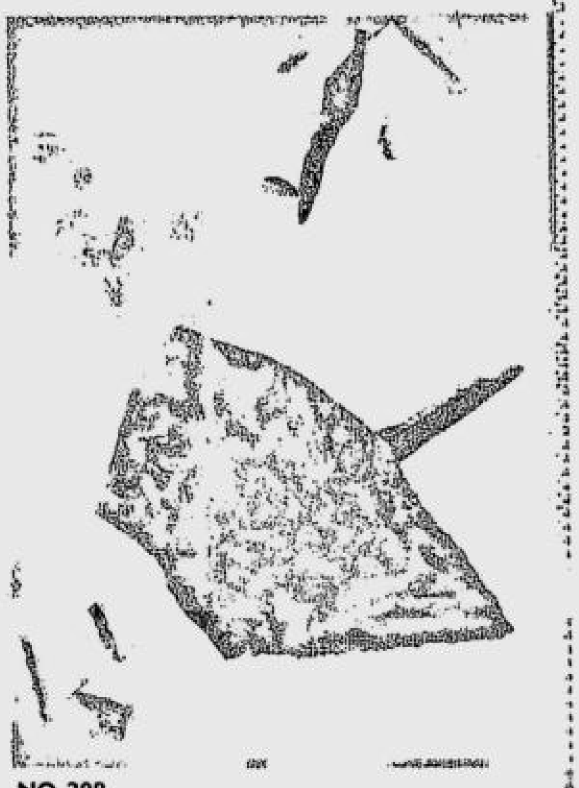
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Dappled dash for a dull world

JOAQUIN Palencia's passion for color was showcased recently in his eponymous exhibit in The Drawing Room at Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City.

To be sure, the artist is also concerned with form, theme and texture, but it is his strong sense of color that makes these pieces look buoyant and—what?—delicious. (An incongruous mix of adjectives, but it can't be helped.)

These are 18 pieces in mixed media on paper. The artist calls them "collage painting on drawing."

Here paper is thickly daubed with acrylic and torn, then, seemingly at random, the pieces are glued on white exposed paper, and the bits and parts are often connected by lines drawn with colored pencil. This results in colorful floating free forms against a flat background, which could be kites or buntings or even Roman candles.

More than the fantastical shapes, it is the colors that grab the viewer's eyes: vermilion, tangerine, burnt sienna, yellow, gold, ochre, turquoise, leaf-green, avocado-green, cerulean.

Acrylic on canvas is Palencia's usual medium, and this is the first time he has used paper.

"Iba ang dating ng papel compared to canvas—very buoyant, very frail, fragile," he says. "Paper cannot be overworked. *Kung tama na sa* canvas, *sobra na sa papel.*"

He is literally hands-on when working, that is, he directly applies the paint on the canvas or paper with his fingers, not using any brush except for his botanical depictions. With his hands directly doing the painting, he says it feels more immediate, the result more spontaneous.

"Ang canvas *parang mas malapit sa akin,"* he says.

The color field

Though more identified with color-field painting, Palencia also does sculpture, of torsos in stainless steel, and organic forms in stoneware and porcelain.

His field of study in the University of the Philippines was actually the sciences, but he had been drawn early to art. From school, at lunchtime, he used to go to Sining Kamalig in Pasay, where he befriended several artists.

He started painting seriously only when he was 20. "The hardest thing I did in my life was to put paint on the canvas for the first time."

In contrast to his formal studies in UP, which he found too intellectualized, art afforded him something instinctive and spontaneous, involving inspiration, feelings. "I just paint what I feel. It's really *hugot sa loob.*"

He held his first show in 1983, and it consisted of the abstraction with which he would be identified.

Palencia's color field is often vivid washes of hues with subtle gradations, Zen-like in their effect on the viewer.

"I like it," he says. "Before Zen painting became popular, I was doing those—placid, quiet, meditative. It absorbs energy."

It wasn't by way of theme, philosophy or aesthetic principle that he reached that concept of the color field, though.

"Having no formal training in painting, I was just experimenting to see how color worked on canvas," he explains.

Quasi-abstraction

He finds the figurative restrictive. *"Gusto ko* free-flowing. *'Yung laro ng dugo sa kamay iba. Ayaw ko 'yung maliliit na* line. In drawing, *ayoko 'yung ayos na ayos."*

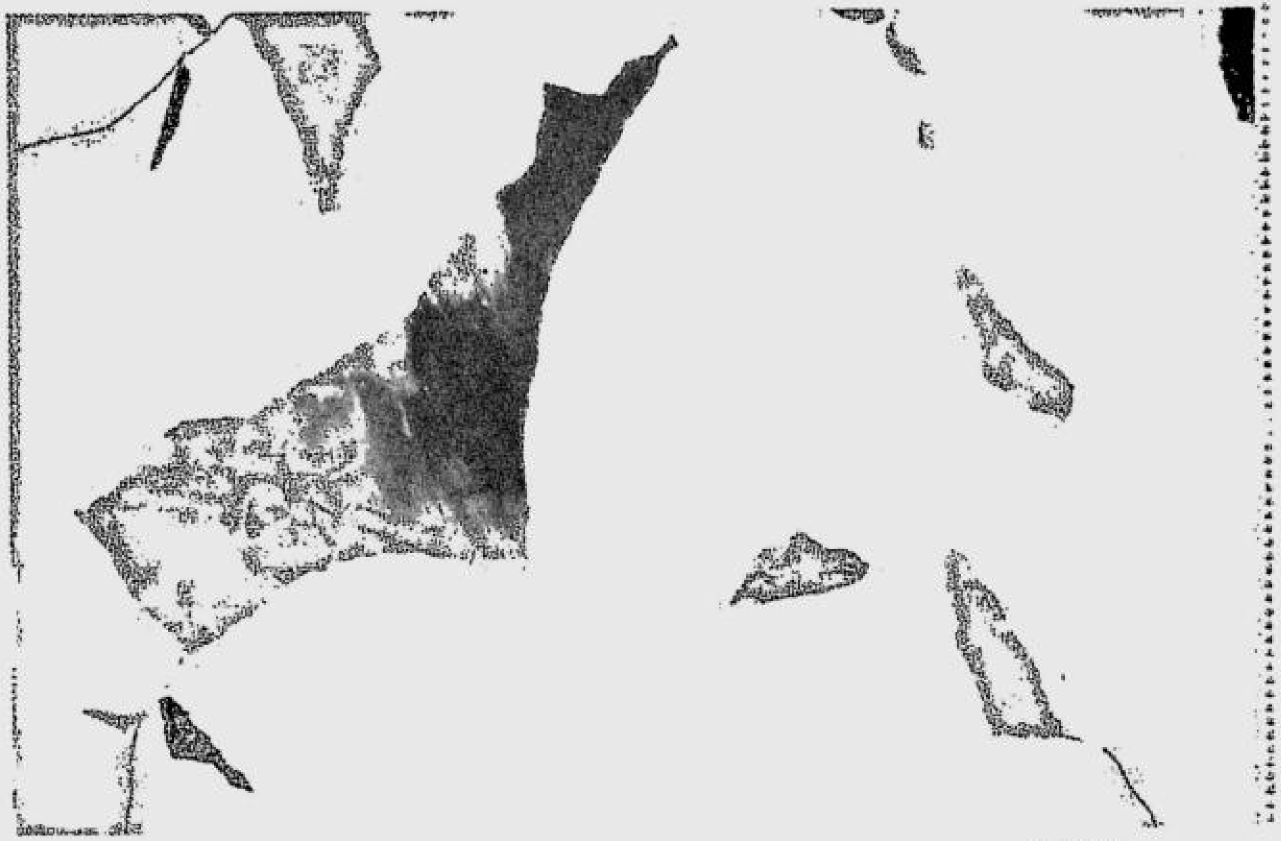
He does the figurative only with his botanicals, such as his colorful large-scale works in the lobbies of Shangri-La Makati and Mandarin Oriental.

In his 30th solo show in The Drawing Room, the artist has merged the abstract and the figurative in a quasi-abstraction of floating shapes. And as those jewel colors confirm, he is still more into color than form.

Artists that appeal to him include early Filipino painters Teodoro Buenaventura and Toribio Herrera, the early works of Legaspi, some Edades, Luz, Bencab, the 1960s works of Joya, Helen Frankenthaler, Kandinsky, the colorists like the Fauvists.

"I like color," he says simply. "Come to think of it, before man started drawing, or, for that matter, before he had any language, he was already communicating with his environment through colors—the redness of the flowers, the green of the leaves, the yellow of the morning, the blueness of the sea..."

Constantino C. Tejero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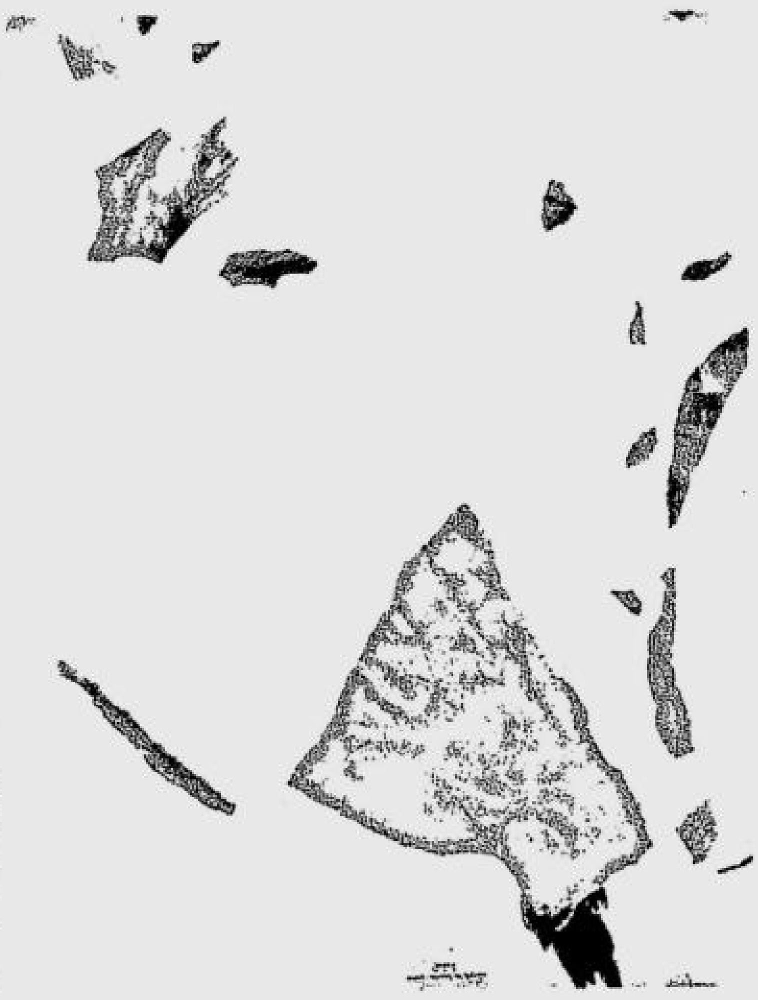
Abstractionist Palencia is in the tradition of the great colorists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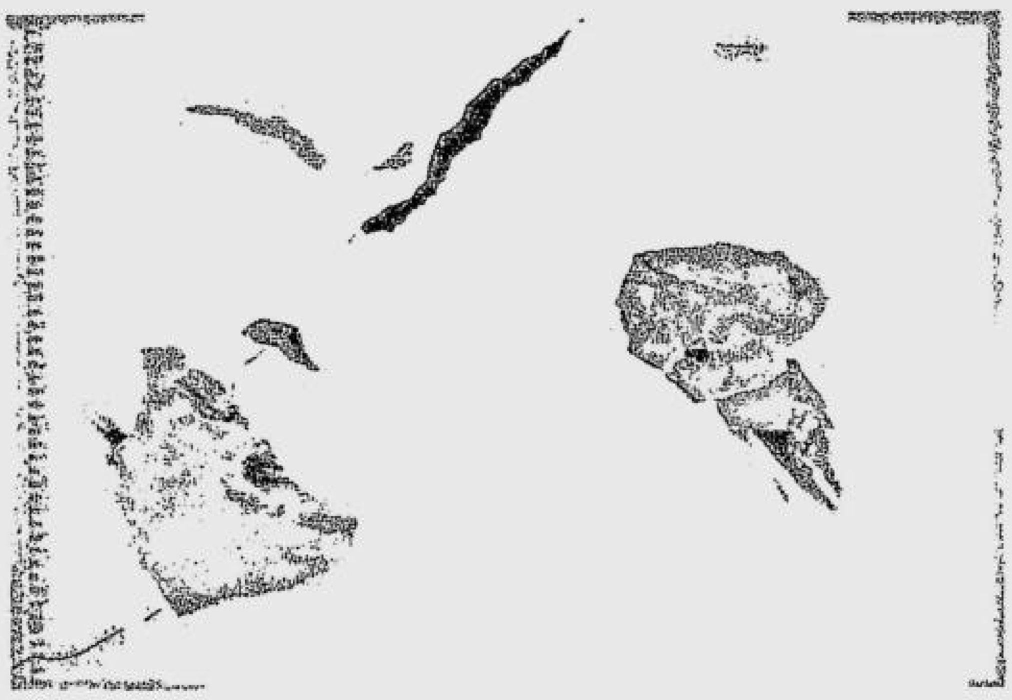
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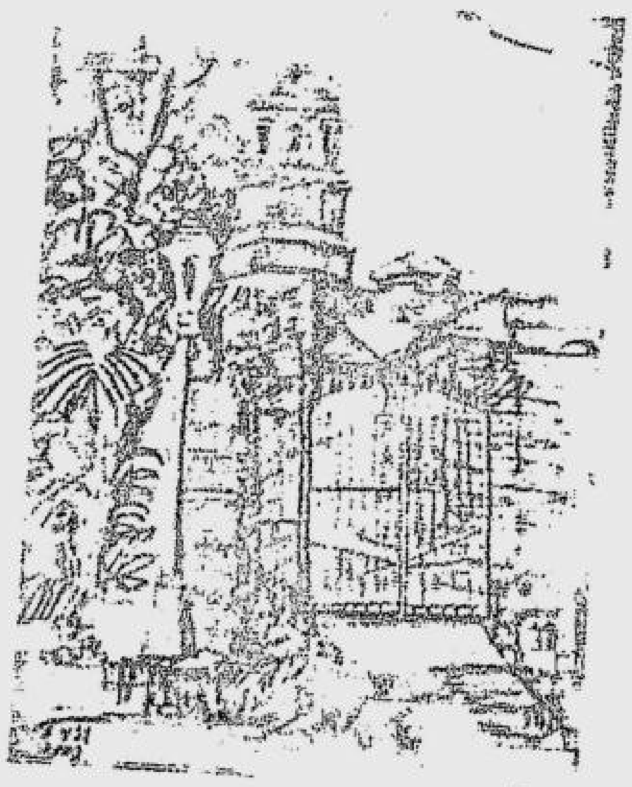
Artists sketch Malolos' heritage sites

THE WOMEN of Malolos Foundation Inc. sent a Heritage Sketch Team to the town's Ancestral Houses and Heritage Sites, which brought the following senior artists in front of Barasoain Church: (seated) Tessie Duldulao; (standing, from left): Bert Gallardo, Tony Herrera, Virgi T. Diano, Mercia C. Aquino, Al Perez and Danny Pangan. Left behind in the Meztiso district of Pariancillo, Sto. Niño, were Noli Española, Art de la Merced, Johnny Soriano and Rafael Cusi, who did the On-the-Spot B & W Bell Tower of Basilica Minore (at right) viewed from Mang Cesar Tantoco's compound, showing the relic of the School of the 21 Women behind the lamp post on the lower left.



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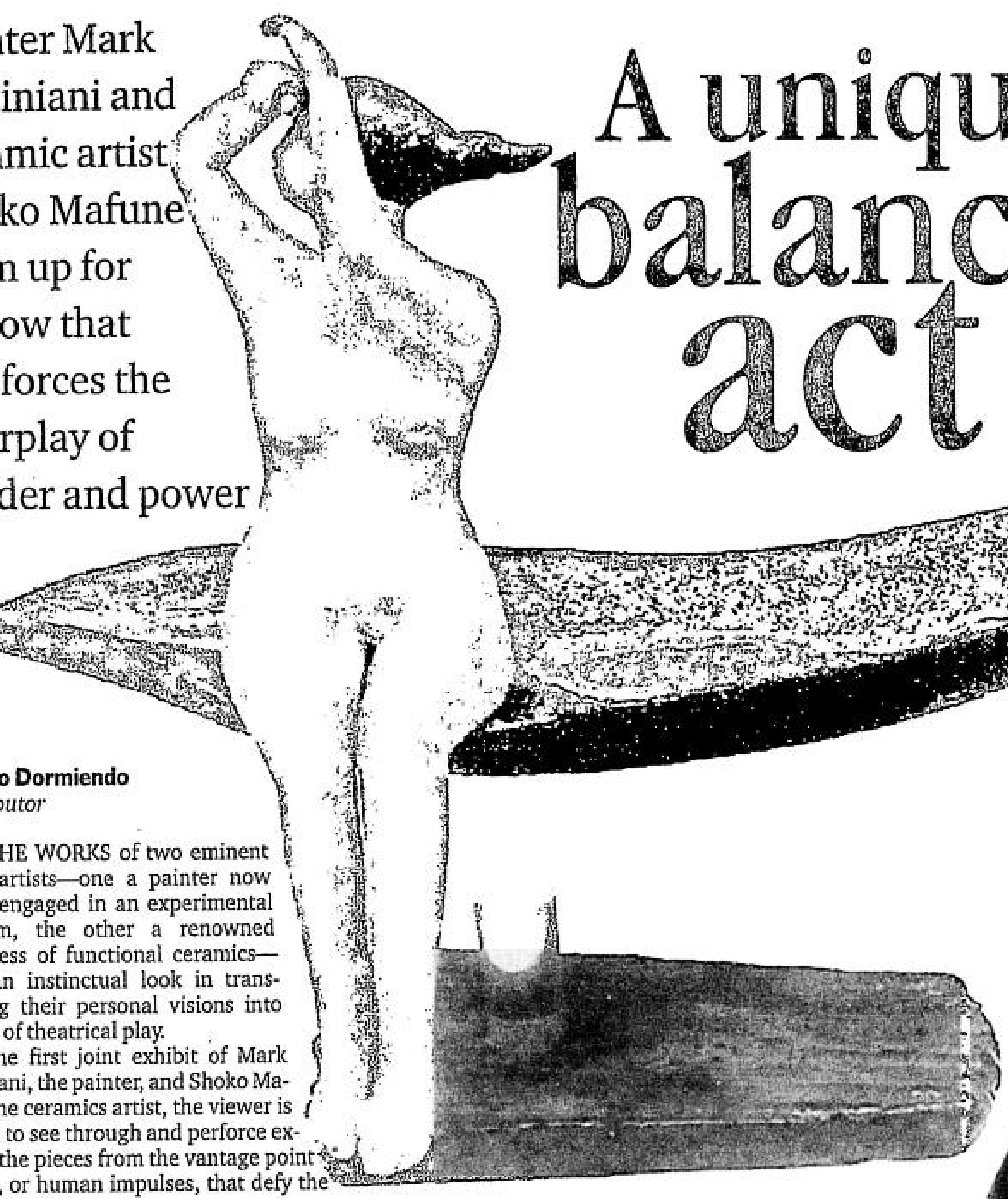
A unique balancing act

Painter Mark Justiniani and ceramic artist Shoko Mafune team up for a show that reinforces the interplay of gender and power



"A VIEW from a Windy Place" by Shoko Mafune

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

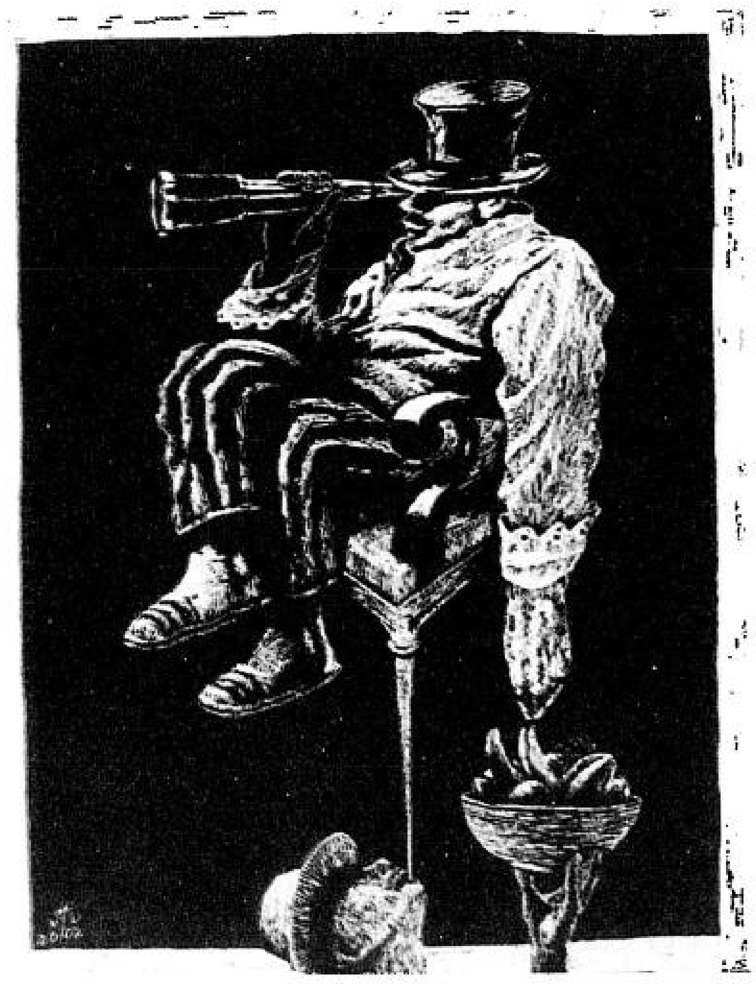
THE WORKS of two eminent artists—one a painter now engaged in an experimental medium, the other a renowned sculptress of functional ceramics—offer an instinctual look in transforming their personal visions into vessels of theatrical play.

In the first joint exhibit of Mark Justiniani, the painter, and Shoko Mafune, the ceramics artist, the viewer is invited to see through and perforce examine the pieces from the vantage point of acts, or human impulses, that defy the laws of gravity.

Titled "Dreams: Etchings and Ceramics," the show at the Galleria Duemila (until May 31) shows a gallery of dream figures and imagistic fragments culled from the subconscious realm, a host of characters startlingly adrift in a complex constellation of earth, water and sky. Their serendipitously complementary works—a curatorial coup by itself—reinforce the juxtapositions of gender and power, with the scenography seething with libidinal, sensual energy.

Pitch-dark silhouettes

Justiniani, erstwhile Bacolod-based artist who now resides in the United States, has responded to the challenge of working on inkboard, a medium that surprisingly lends his etchings an illusionistic dimension. The subjects he has chosen—jugglers, acrobats, court jesters, madcap circus denizens and, most prominently, gamblers—have their stakes perceptibly aloft in mid-air. Donning *de rigueur* three-piece suits, with an occasional cigarette dangling from their mouths, these characters perform the well-worn tricks of having to conceal their true identity with sleight-of-hand chicanery. Like trapos of old and new provenance, sporting the well-disguised mask worn by so-called public servants, they run, jump, jostle and juggle their way to instant fame and fortune. It is small wonder many people from show biz are irresistibly lured into politics, the two being inseparable entities.



"TANAW" by Mark Justiniani

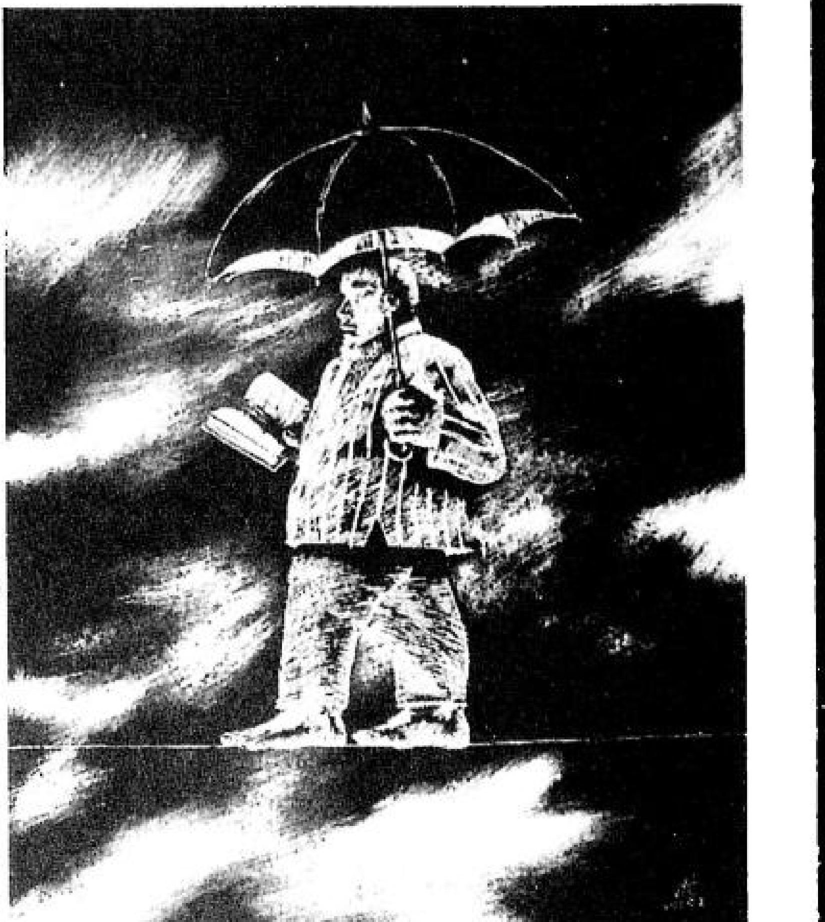
The artist has, of course, wisely tempered his overarching disdain for their breed, opting to satirize their monumental follies in a deck of cards, through an obstacle race run across huge burning candles, or via the image of the film director aloft in his pedestal of folding chair, truly the malevolent orchestrator of the most powerful medium ever invented.

The medium of inkboard—with its pitch-dark silhouettes—has, in the hands of Justiniani, aptly enhanced the portrayal of this con artist who comes in all possible guises and disguises. Justiniani has, in particular, conjured his face as that of Everyman, in many ways resembling the public personas of well-entrenched politicians, from their trademark hairstyles down to the lecherous smirk that can, at the drop of a hat, turn into an affable smile. They are, indeed, the true masters in this game of grand deception.

Gust and wind

The sculptures of Shoko Mafune, on the other hand, are kiln-dried free-standing ceramic pieces, mainly of sinuous women caught in their seductive, feminine allure. Adrift in sleep, wading in a pool, or cavorting around a primeval forest, these women are shown basking in their naked glory. They, too, are perpetually engaged in a balancing act of having to mask their sensuality by ironically casting their inhibitions to the wind.

The element of wind, coincidentally, pervades Mafune's works as her women merrily prance around to the breezy music of gust and wind, with such titles as "Listen to the Breeze," "A View from a Windy Place," and "South Wind."

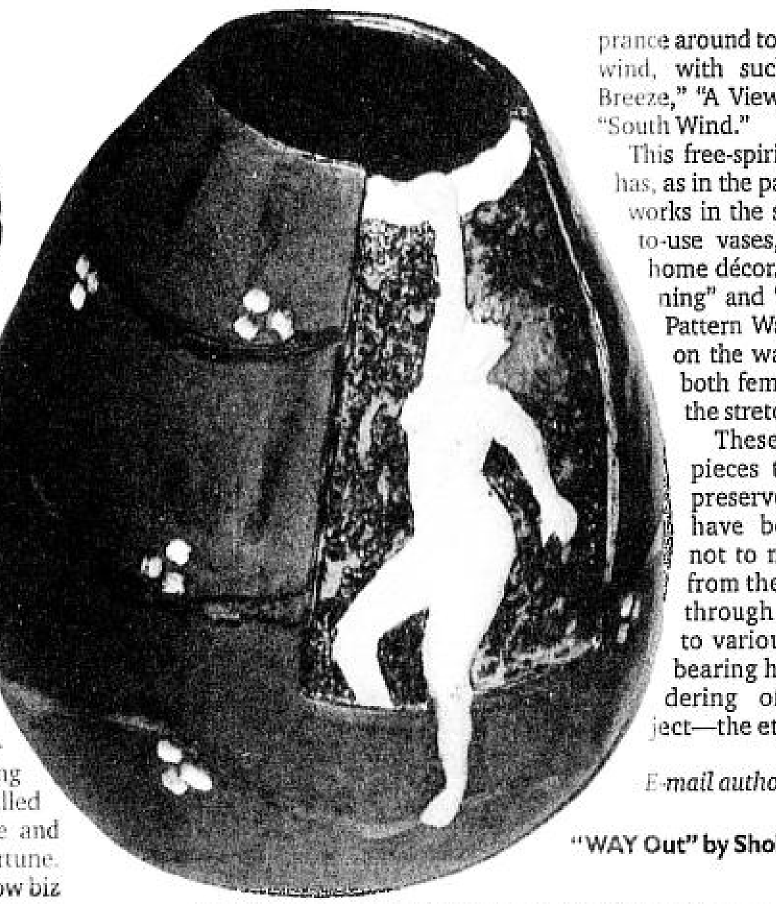


"GURO "by Mark Justiniani

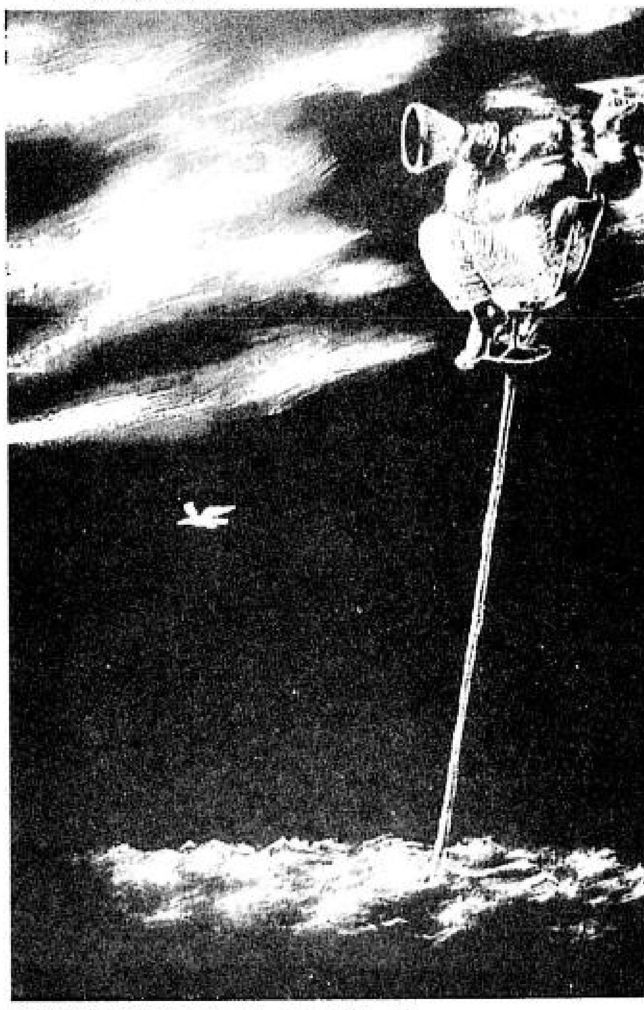
This free-spirited Japanese ceramic artist has, as in the past, transformed many of her works in the show into functional, ready-to-use vases, plates, bowls and sundry home décor. A couple of them—"Awakening" and "A Bedroom with a Stripped Pattern Wall"—are meant for hanging on the wall. "Dreaming in Hand" has both female figures being cupped by the stretched palm of the hand.

These are, however, all prize pieces that one must protect and preserve for posterity since they have been painstakingly crafted, not to mention their prices, culled from the artist's mastery of the kiln, through her innumerable journeys to various places in the world, and bearing her idiosyncratic soulful rendering of her time-honored subject—the eternal woman.

E-mail author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com



"WAY Out" by Shoko Mafune



"OVERSEAS Call" by Mark Justiniani

Met unveils latest find in Vigan

A 20th century Letras y Figuras piece got its first public airing during the Vigan art festival

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

MANILA'S Metropolitan Museum unveiled a recently discovered 1918 Letras y Figuras work in water color, ink and pencil in parchment by Angel de Guzman in Vigan City.

The 20th century example of a 19th century art form was the latest addition to the museum's traveling exhibition, which was brought to the city as part of this year's Viva Vigan Binatbatan Festival of the Arts.

Newly arrived Spanish Ambassador Ignacio Sagaz and Vigan City Mayor Eva Marie Singson Medina, Vigan was the first place outside Metro Manila that Sagaz visited.

Letras y Figuras (LYF) was an art form popular in the late 19th to early 20th centuries. Whimsical figures were drawn to spell out letters of a person's name. The Vigan exhibit featured more prominent LYF pieces by José Honorato Lozano.

Aside from bringing the exhibit to Vigan, the museum also conducted a day-long LYF workshop for a dozen schoolchildren.

Art scholar Santiago Pilar, in his lecture on the LYF history to the kids, said the art form showcased Filipino culture in the 19th century and gave glimpses of Filipino humor.

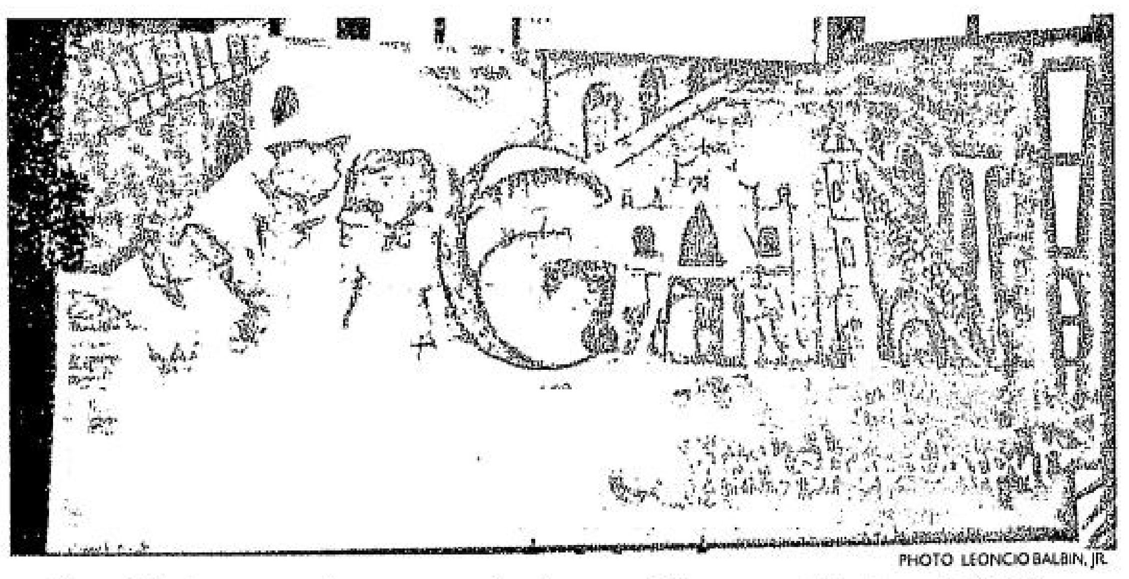


PHOTO LEONCIO BALBIN, JR.

Pilar said businessmen and society matrons commissioned LYF pieces to immortalize their names. Some foreign travelers also commissioned LYF for themselves but Pilar said most of the patrons of art form were Chinese.

The LYF expert said finding a 19th century example of the art form now was extremely rare. He said some of the pieces he found decades ago in magazines could no longer be found.

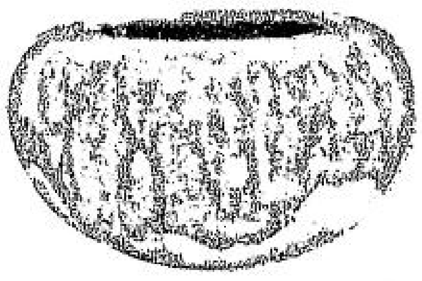
Pilar said because they had become rare, any new find would be valuable. "It's like winning the sweepstakes if you find one now. A Lozano now costs P4 million," he added.

The 20th century LYF spelled the name of Ysidra Lim, de Guzman's aunt. Lim took care of the orphaned children of her cousin Benedicto Antonio de Guzman, the artist's father.

Sometime before his death in 1919, the nephew made the LYF for his kind aunt as a "gift of love." Victorino Manalo, museum director, said the LYF was not as intricate as those of Lozano but still a significant find.

The schoolchildren who attended the workshop practiced their recently acquired skill by doing a LYF to spell Vigan. Using only crayola, the children crafted a piece of art that showcased some of the Heritage Site's most popular attractions like the cathedral of St. Paul, the cobbled stone street and *kalesa*.

Other kids spelled their names the LYF way.

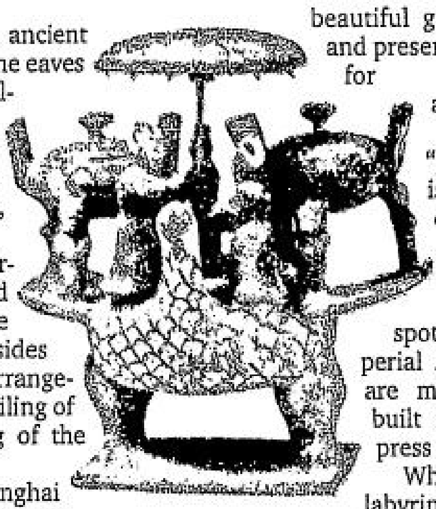


STUNNING architectural detail depicts a demon.

The Chinese sense of design

THE INTRICATE sense of design of the Chinese shows in how they employ motifs and patterns not only in their arts but also in their everyday lives. These patterns range from the playful to the severe, from the simple to the recondite.

They decorate even the commonplace, often even overdecorate. It is a passion for decorating that borders on the obsessive-compulsive.



Witness their ornate ancient architecture. Why, even the eaves are elaborately embellished, and the drains and gutters have rich carvings, not to mention the walls, roofs, doors, windows and pillars.

Drive through many areas in the countryside and you will marvel at the neat patterns on the waysides and farm lots, from the arrangement of the trees to the piling of the hay, to the planting of the wheat and cabbages.

It is said that in Shanghai you can find more surprises per square meter of space than in Disneyland. And were we surprised!—the moment we arrived.

They raise gardens under the elevated highways and intertwining viaducts. They outline the rims and edges of these highways, bridges and buildings with millions of tiny colored lights, so that at night they appear as ghostly forms floating in midspace. When night falls, the whole city is too spectral to contemplate.

In the new district of Pudong, we espied large globes of yellow and red on a post on a pedestrian island in the middle of the road. They looked like plastic balls in primary colors, we thought that was just a bit kitschy for this chic district. On closer look, however, we found out they were flowering plants.

That wasn't just any topiary, in which you trim the plants according to the shape you fancy. Here the plants, asters or chrysanthemums, have been so planted that when they bloom the colors of the flowers form symbolic shapes.

Intimate garden

Chinese design on a more comprehensive scale is showcased in the old Huangpo district of Shanghai, specifically in the Yu Yuan Garden, an exemplar of the classical Chinese garden.

Built in 1559 in the lower reaches of Yangtze River, this private garden was styled and flourished during the Ming and Qing Dynasties. It has been described as the most beautiful garden in Southeast Asia, and preserved through the centuries for all the world to see.

Its name meaning "pleasing one's parents," it is, in a sense, a family garden, despite an expanse of over two hectares. It comprises over 40 artfully partitioned scenic spots, intimate, unlike the imperial gardens of Beijing which are much vaster, having been built for the emperor, the empress and the concubines.

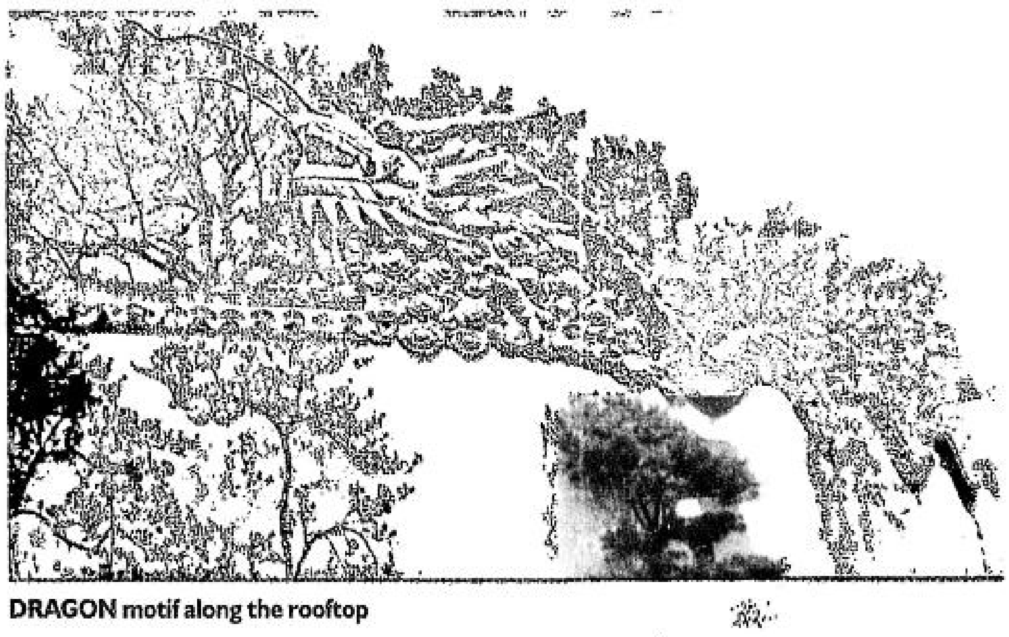
What this garden has are labyrinthine corridors, secret passageways, mysterious chambers, centuries-old trees, rocks and flowers, ponds and streams, lovely structures of ancient wood, metal and stone with such names as the Chamber of Ten Thousand Flowers, the Happy Fish Waterside Pavilion.

The cultural relics here have been well-preserved: calligraphy and paintings, inscriptions, clay sculptures, brick carvings. A curious artifact is the pieces of 200-year-old furniture fashioned from roots of the *banyan* tree.

Along a double corridor is a series of picture windows ingeniously arranged in varying perspectives so that, as one passes by, one sees the landscape outside unfold as in a movie.

The foliage and rockeries are meant to tell some myth or history, or represent or mimic some scene elsewhere in China.

One stone structure has a form that alludes to an ancient boat. Others have motifs of dragons, lions, demons. Fence-like structures in the chambers mimic those geometric patterns embossed on mooncakes.



DRAGON motif along the rooftop

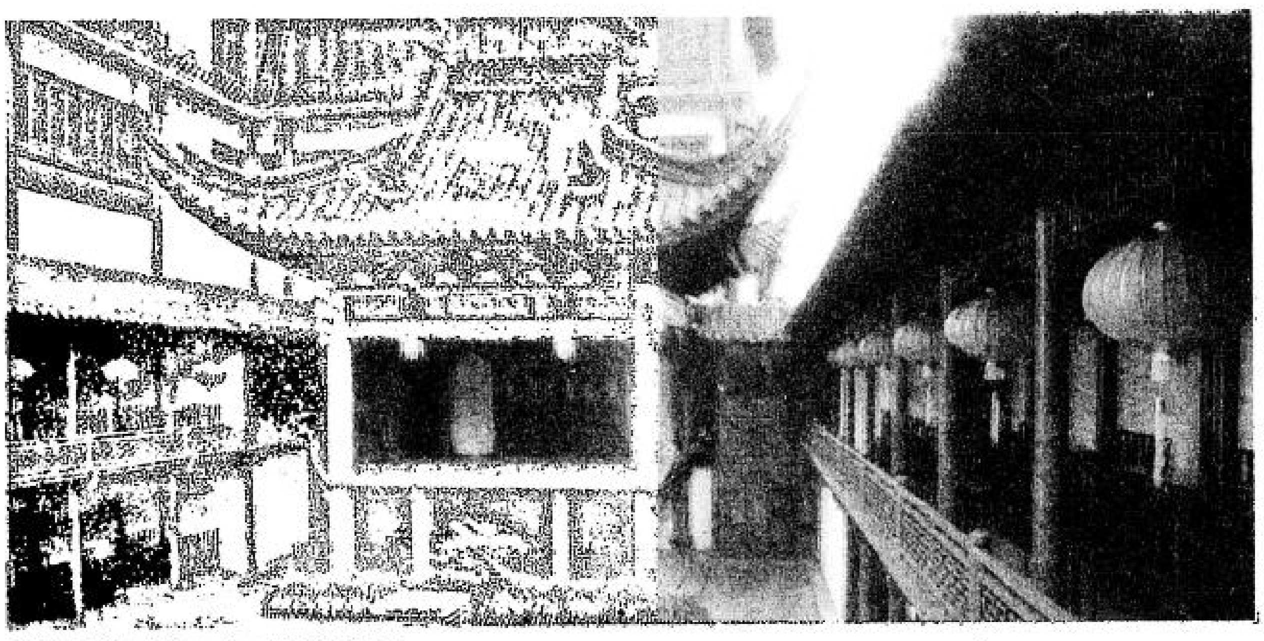
You're held captive at Cebu airport. A two-hour delay.

Enough time to wander aimlessly through the hallways

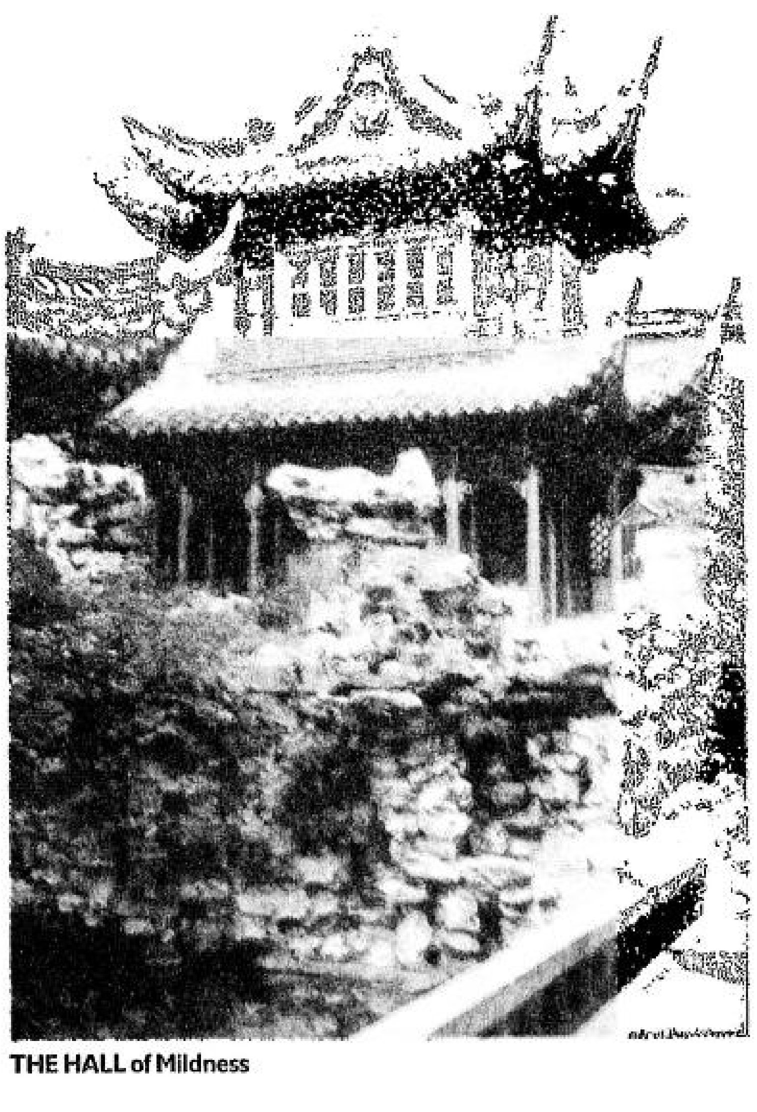
and read every newspaper you can lay your hands on.

Is this the most you can make out of idle time?

(They desperately need you to upload your photographs to meet the newspaper deadline in Manila.)



THE HALL of Observing in Quietness



THE HALL of Mildness

Commanding view

The Tower of Happiness is a structure decorated with stones whose shapes and arrangement allude to clouds, thus representing the highest tower in the world.

The Hall of Mildness is so called because, facing a mountain (actually a boulder) with a running stream at the back, it is supposed to induce serenity in a person. It has the three essential components of a garden: pond, rockery and koi fish

The Jade Magnificence Hall, facing the Jade Stone Peak (actually not jade but a granite relic over 1,000 years old), is typical of the halls and chambers in which to seat the master of the house or the visiting emperor, from where he could have a commanding view of the scenery, seeing everything where others could not.

Finally, in the Hall of Observing in Quietness, there is an ancient big stage for chamber performances. Elegant, with refined decoration, gracefully upturned eaves, exquisitely carved beams and rafters, this was the first stage built south of the Yangtze. At night, when illuminated by hundreds of lanterns, it appears overflowing with Chinese classic beauty and taste.

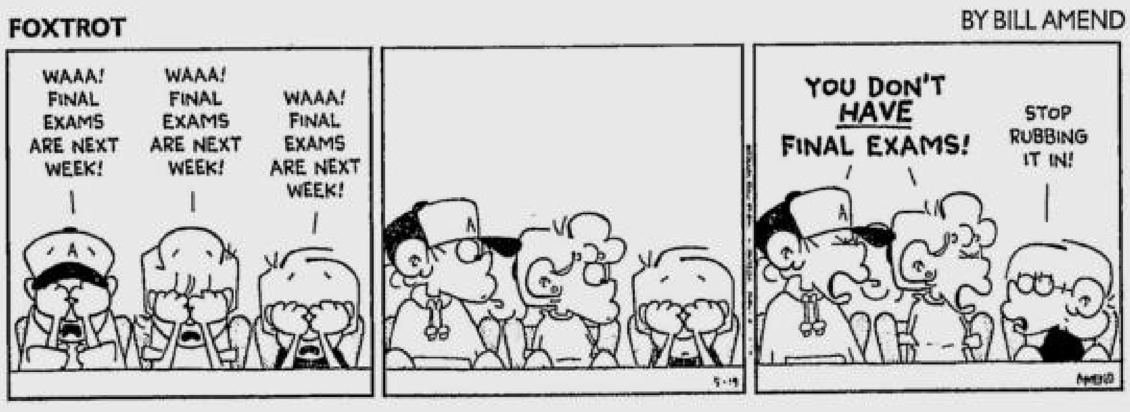
The Yu Yuan Garden receives over a million visitors every year (including Queen Elizabeth II and President Bill Clinton). It is now listed as one of the national cultural relics of China, protected by the State Council of the Central Government.

This is the kind of government we need for our Mehans, our Intramuroses, our Lunetas.

Constantino C. Tejero

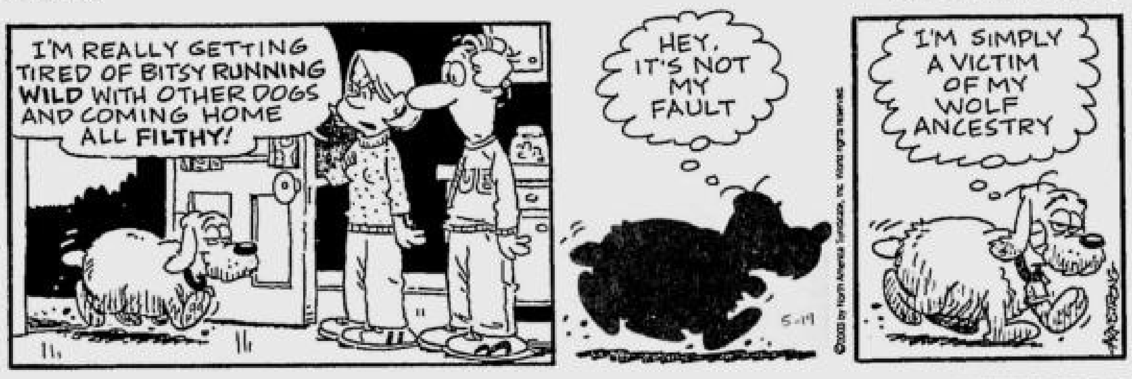
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


WAAA! FINAL EXAMS ARE NEXT WEEK!
WAAA! FINAL EXAMS ARE NEXT WEEK!
WAAA! FINAL EXAMS ARE NEXT WEEK!
YOU DON'T HAVE FINAL EXAMS!
STOP RUBBING IT IN!
5-19
AMEND

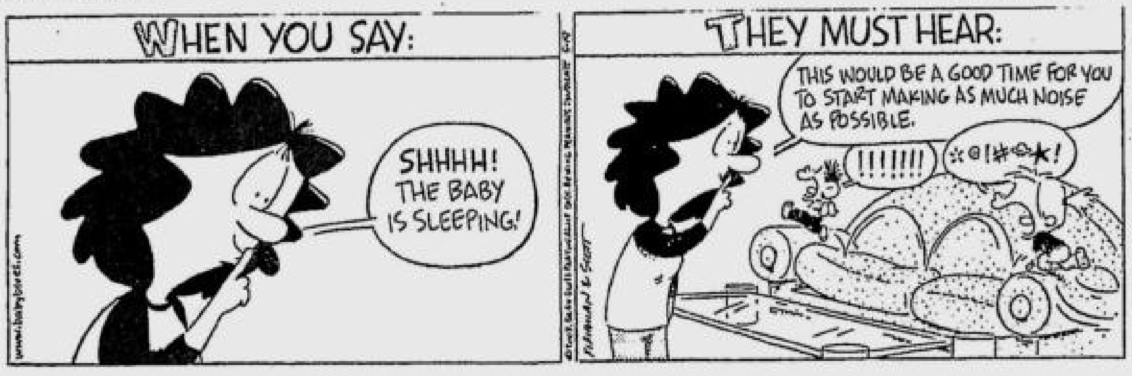
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


I'M REALLY GETTING TIRED OF BITSY RUNNING WILD WITH OTHER DOGS AND COMING HOME ALL FILTHY!
HEY, IT'S NOT MY FAULT
I'M SIMPLY A VICTIM OF MY WOLF ANCESTRY
5-19
ARMSTRONG

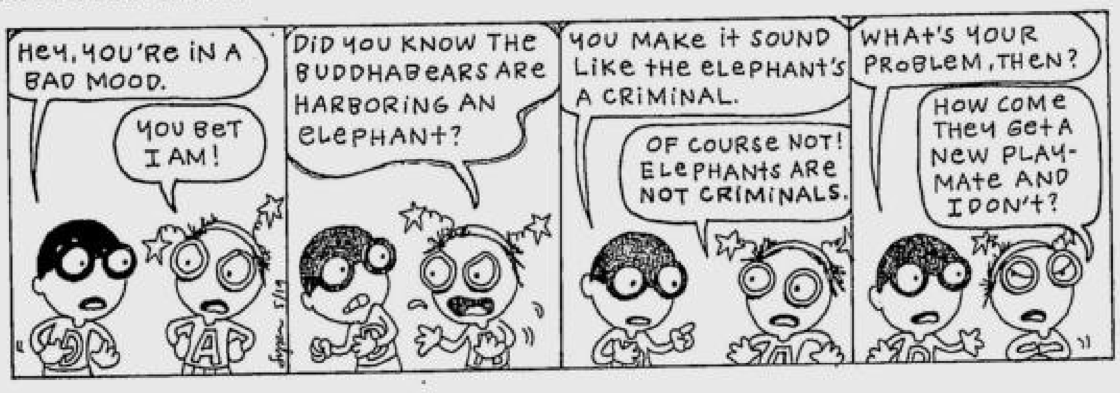
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHEN YOU SAY:
SHHHH! THE BABY IS SLEEPING!
THEY MUST HEAR:
THIS WOULD BE A GOOD TIME FOR YOU TO START MAKING AS MUCH NOISE AS POSSIBLE.
!!!!!!!
*@!#◎★!
www.babyblues.com
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, You're iN A BAD MOOD.
You BeT I AM!
DiD You KNOW The BUDDHABeARS ARe HARBORiNG AN eLePHANt?
You MAKe it SOUND Like the eLePHANt's A CRiMiNAL.
OF COURSe NOT! ELePHANts ARe NOT CRiMiNALS.
WHAt's YOUR PRoBLeM, THeN?
How Come They Get A New PLAY-MAte AND I DON't?

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have enormous energy and are a natural leader. Justice is important to you. Many of you seek out specific spiritual training. Your success in life is based on your one-pointed focus and steady determination. (Your perseverance always pays off.) You are a skilled communicator. Close relationships and partnerships are your focus

Birthdate of: Nora Ephron, writer/director; Malcolm X, activist; Nancy Kwan, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Resist the temptation to blow too much money on fun, entertainment or indulging loved ones. Too much of a good thing is simply—too much!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Be careful about the promises you make to family members today. Yes, it's true that the sweetest fruit is out on a limb—but can that limb support you?

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You can breathe a sigh of relief. That positive state of mind you have right now is validated. The key to happiness is being content with what you have.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Don't spend too much money on friends today. And don't spend too much money because friends urge you to do so. You don't have to live up to the expectations of others.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Be careful you don't bite off more than you can chew today. In your desire to please bosses and superiors, you might promise more than you can deliver.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Plans for travel, as well as plans connected with the media, publishing and higher education, could look rosier than they are. Think positive—but keep your eyes open.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Definitely do not give the farm away today. Your judgment is influenced by something that makes you a bit excessive and too openhanded.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): It's a good day to make big plans and set long-range goals with someone. Don't worry about the little details right now—just get the big picture.

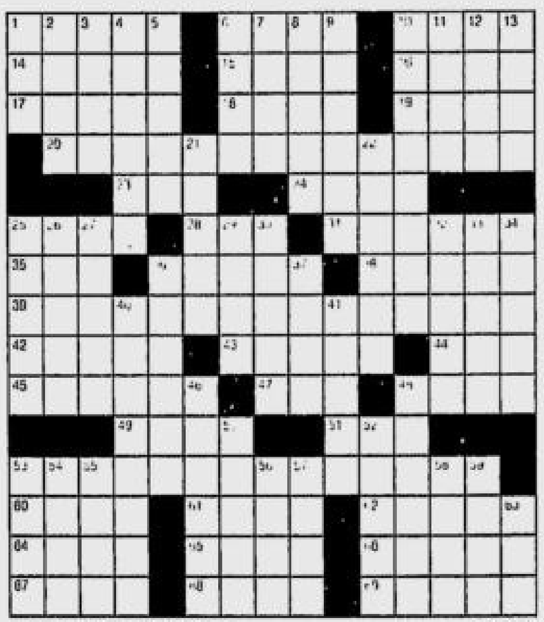
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): We all know that enthusiasm is a contagious thing. Today your positive energy and upbeat style make everybody you meet a little bit happier.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Be careful with business transactions related to the hospitality industry and the entertainment world. All financial speculation is unreliable today.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel optimistic and positive about life today. Because you have the big picture, you can think in terms of long-range plans and large structures. Nevertheless, remain flexible and listen to others.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're tempted to please people at work by promising them the moon. Think twice before you speak today. (If you're going to shoot yourself in the toe, make sure you don't have your foot in your mouth.)

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Eugene R. Puffenberger
Houston, TX

5/19/03

ACROSS
1 Flops
6 Part of U.A.E.
10 Cast one's ballot
14 Vigilant
15 Bamako's nation
16 Fence the loot, e.g.
17 Eyelashes
18 Andes residents
19 Cordelia's father
20 Cole
23 DDE's opponent
24 Square measure
25 Malden or Malone
28 Health resort
31 Portions out
35 Anger
36 Relative of bingo
38 T.S. or George
39 Cole
42 Exxon rival
43 Book before Philemon
44 Building wing
45 Holy places
47 Massachusetts cape
48 Liberate
49 Sicilian spouter
51 Hard water?
53 Cole
60 Mine entrance
61 "The Night of the Hunter" screenwriter
62 Book of maps
64 Traditional wisdom
65 Trace of color
66 British P.M.
67 Rogers or Astaire
68 Punta del ___, Uruguay
69 Medicinal herb

DOWN
1 DUI figure
2 Melange
3 Pell-___ (headlong)
4 Type of shower
5 Gambler's bet
6 Notorious Idi
7 Tolled
8 Aluminum maker
9 Part of Nigeria
10 Odin's hall
11 Follow the rules
12 Yoked group
13 Nice to be?
21 Japanese immigrant
22 Subleases
25 Pueblo ceremonial chambers
26 Bakery emanation
27 Scout's job
29 History
30 Caper
32 Edmonton player
33 Linen fabric
34 Inscribed tablet on a building
36 Falling-down drunk
37 Aware of
40 Time-honored
41 Sound
46 Having handles
48 Emotional condition
50 Sponsorship
52 Grumpy crustaceans
53 Leg part
54 Smell
55 Bog down
56 Flat rate?
57 Sampras or Rose
58 Vivacity
59 Drizzle
63 Mrs. in Monterrey

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

A	R	R	E	S	T	E	R	■	S	C	O	F	F	S
L	E	E	S	H	O	R	E	■	U	R	S	U	L	A
B	A	C	T	E	R	I	A	■	B	E	L	L	E	D
E	D	I	E	■	I	N	D	I	S	P	O	S	E	D
R	I	P	E	R	■	S	A	N	T	E	■	O	R	E
T	E	E	M	E	R	■	P	S	I	S	■	M	E	N
A	R	S	I	N	E	■	T	E	T	■	R	E	D	S
■	■	■	N	O	P	E	■	T	U	T	U	■	■	■
S	H	A	G	■	L	I	P	■	T	U	N	E	R	S
N	O	S	■	D	I	D	O	■	E	N	A	M	E	L
I	T	S	■	A	C	E	R	B	■	A	R	U	B	A
F	L	E	A	M	A	R	K	E	T	■	O	L	A	V
F	I	N	E	S	T	■	E	V	A	L	U	A	T	E
E	N	T	R	E	E	■	R	E	P	E	N	T	E	R
R	E	S	O	L	D	■	S	L	A	N	D	E	R	S

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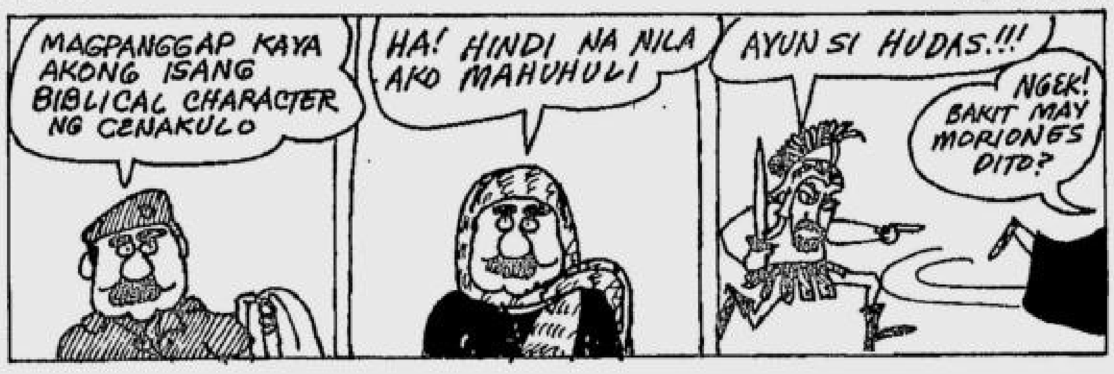
5/19/03

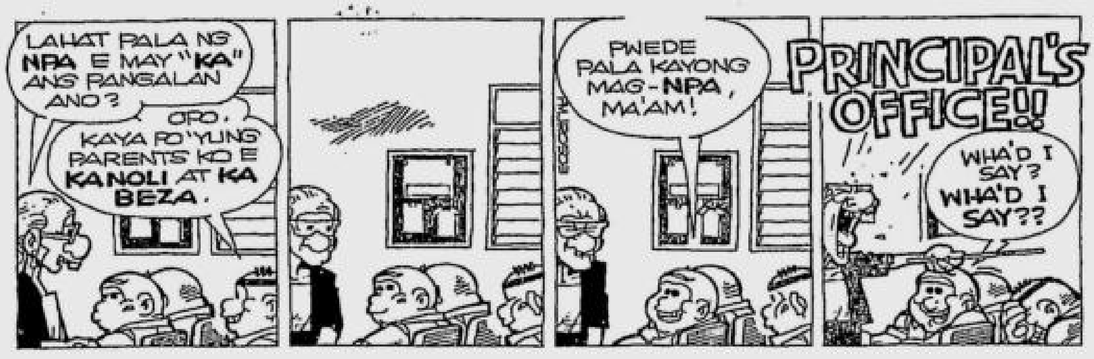
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAGPANGGAP KAYA AKONG ISANG BIBLICAL CHARACTER NG CENAKULO
HA! HINDI NA NILA AKO MAHUHULI
AYUN SI HUDAS.!!!
NGEK! BAKIT MAY MORIONES DITO?

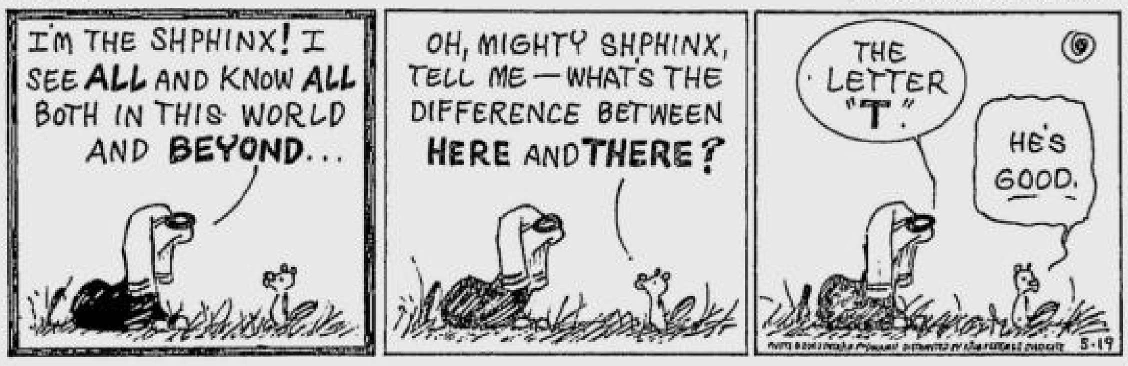
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


LAHAT PALA NG NPA E MAY "KA" ANG PANGALAN ANO?
OPO. KAYA PO 'YUNG PARENTS KO E KANOLI AT KA BEZA.
PWEDE PALA KAYONG MAG-NPA, MA'AM!
PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE!!
WHA'D I SAY? WHA'D I SAY??

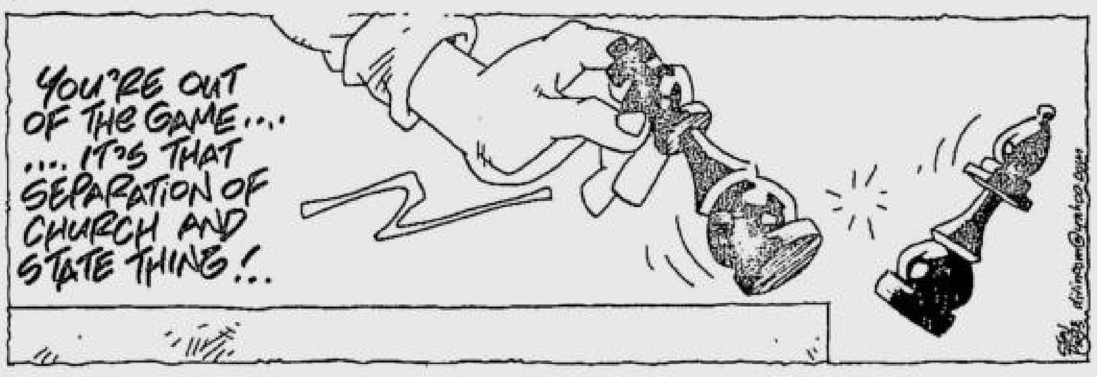
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


I'M THE SHPHINX! I SEE ALL AND KNOW ALL BOTH IN THIS WORLD AND BEYOND...
OH, MIGHTY SHPHINX, TELL ME — WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HERE AND THERE?
THE LETTER "T."
HE'S GOOD.
5-19

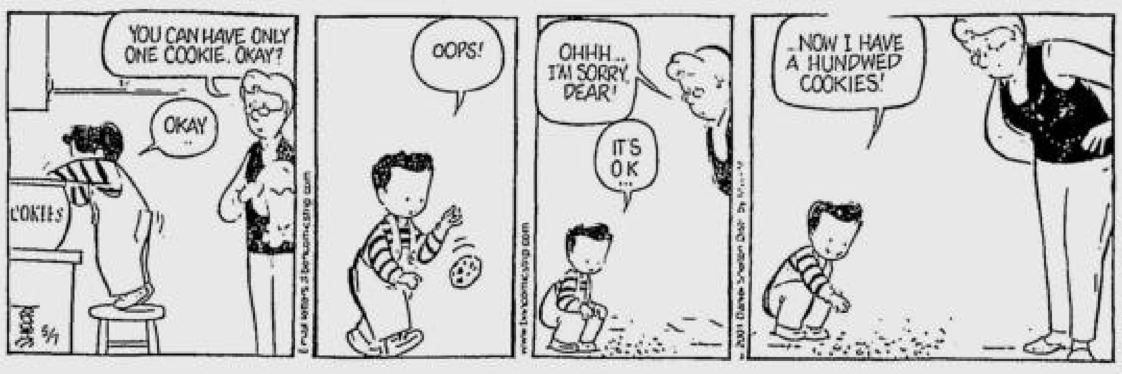
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


YOU'RE OUT OF THE GAME... ...IT'S THAT SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE THING!..

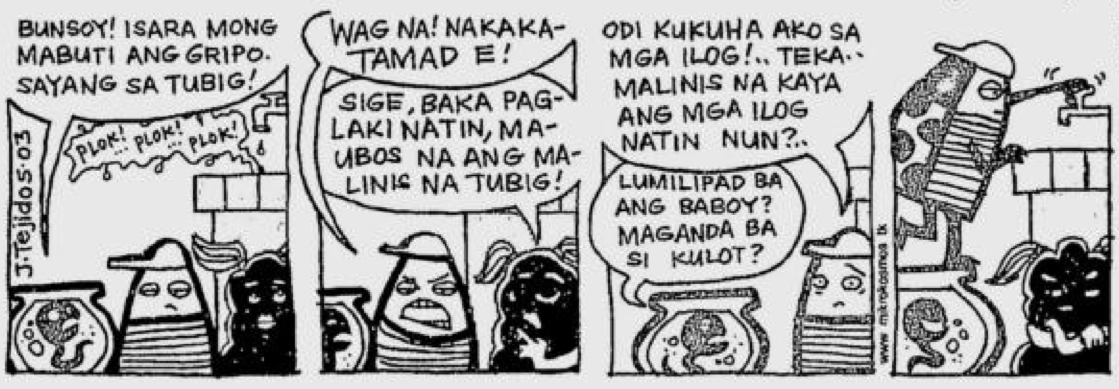
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


YOU CAN HAVE ONLY ONE COOKIE. OKAY?
OKAY
COOKIES
OOPS!
OHHH... I'M SORRY, DEAR!
IT'S OK...
...NOW I HAVE A HUNDWED COOKIES!

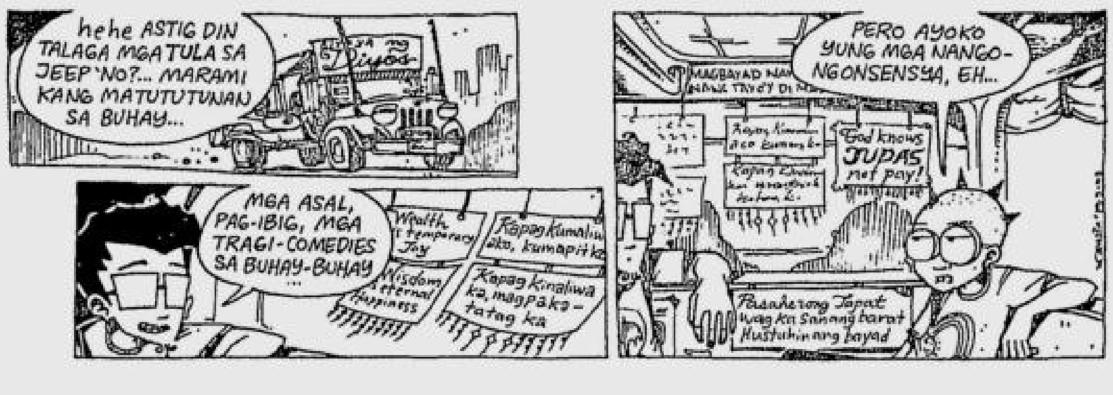
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BUNSOY! ISARA MONG MABUTI ANG GRIPO. SAYANG SA TUBIG!
PLOK!.. PLOK!.. PLOK!
WAG NA! NAKAKA-TAMAD E!
SIGE, BAKA PAG-LAKI NATIN, MA-UBOS NA ANG MA-LINIS NA TUBIG!
ODI KUKUHA AKO SA MGA ILOG!.. TEKA.. MALINIS NA KAYA ANG MGA ILOG NATIN NUN?..
LUMILIPAD BA ANG BABOY? MAGANDA BA SI KULOT?
J.Tejidos·03

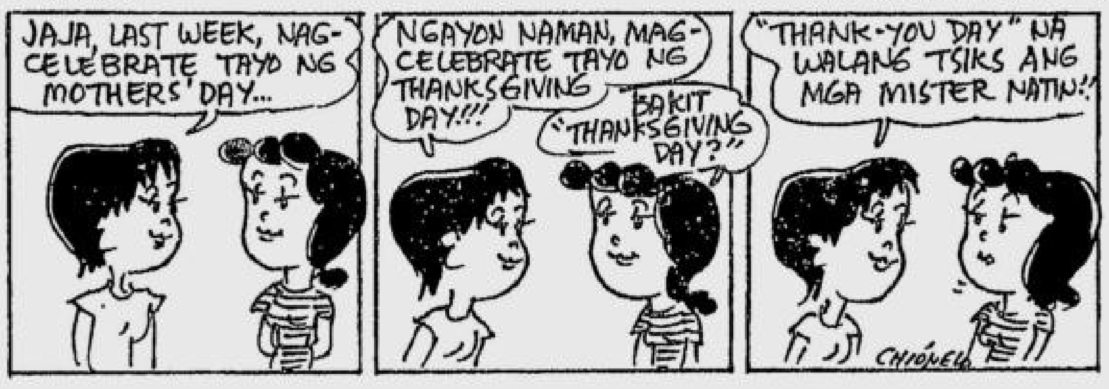
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


hehe ASTIG DIN TALAGA MGA TULA SA JEEP 'NO?... MARAMI KANG MATUTUTUNAN SA BUHAY...
MGA ASAL, PAG-IBIG, MGA TRAGI-COMEDIES SA BUHAY-BUHAY...
Wealth is temporary Joy
Kapag Kumaliwa ako, kumapit ka
Wisdom eternal happiness
Kapag kinaliwa ka, magpaka-tatag ka
PERO AYOKO YUNG MGA NANGO-NGONSENSYA, EH...
God knows JUDAS not pay!
Pasaherong Tapat wag ka Sanang barat Hustuhin ang bayad

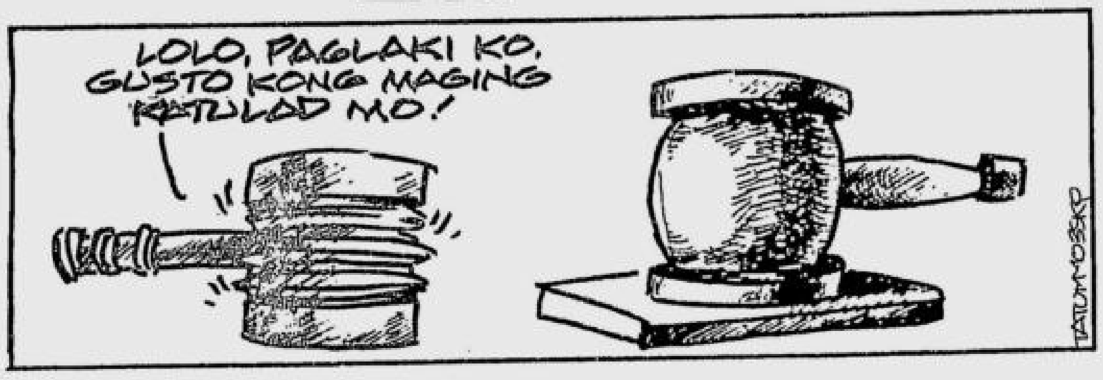
LOVEKNOTS

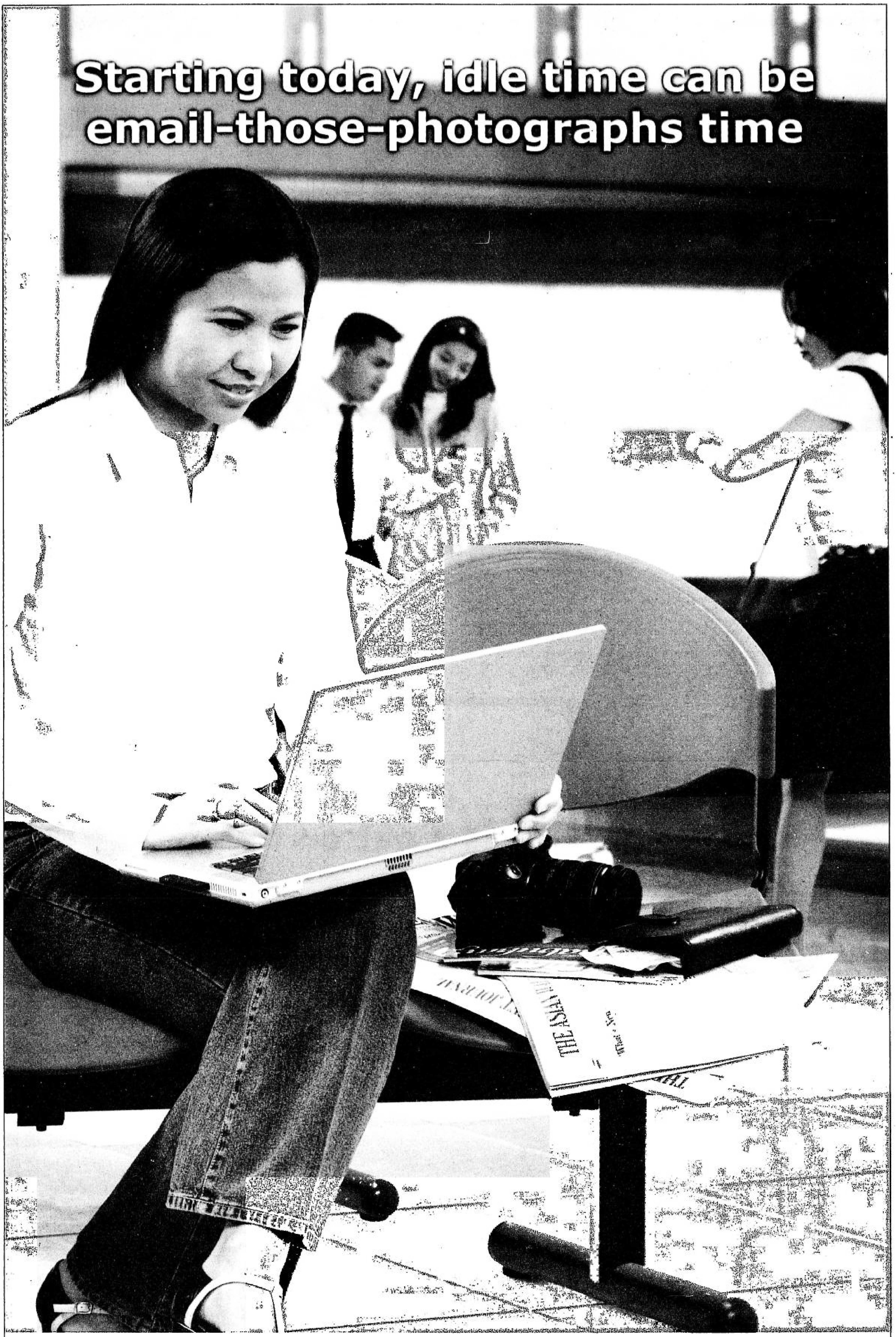
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


JAJA, LAST WEEK, NAG-CELEBRATE TAYO NG MOTHERS' DAY...
NGAYON NAMAN, MAG-CELEBRATE TAYO NG THANKSGIVING DAY!!!
BAKIT "THANKSGIVING DAY?"
"THANK-YOU DAY" NA WALANG TSIKS ANG MGA MISTER NATIN!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


LOLO, PAGLAKI KO, GUSTO KONG MAGING KATULAD MO!
TATUM-MOSERP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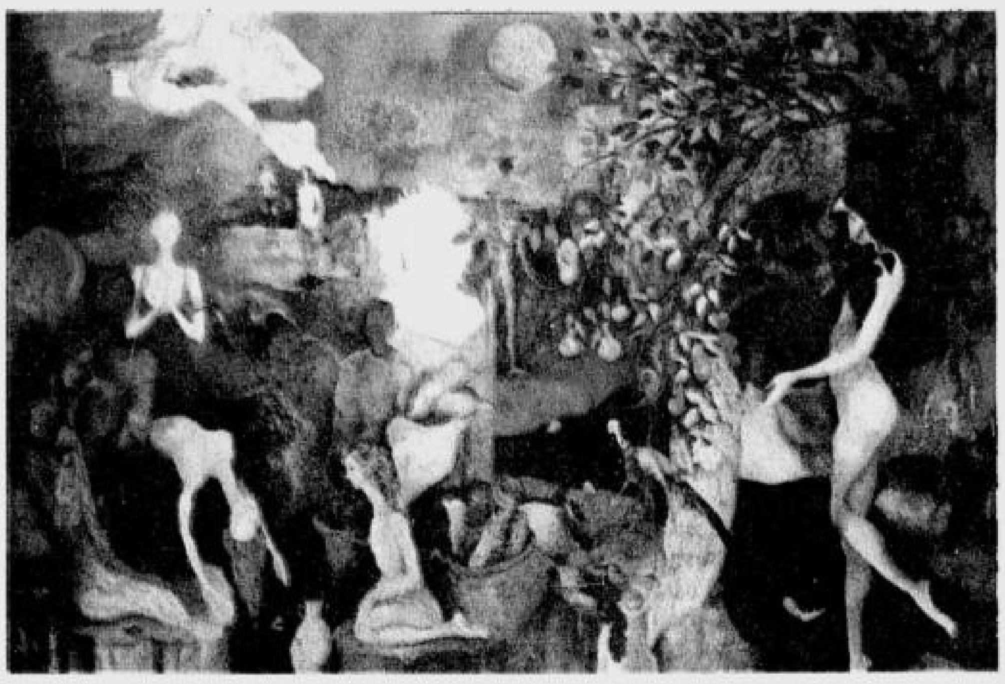
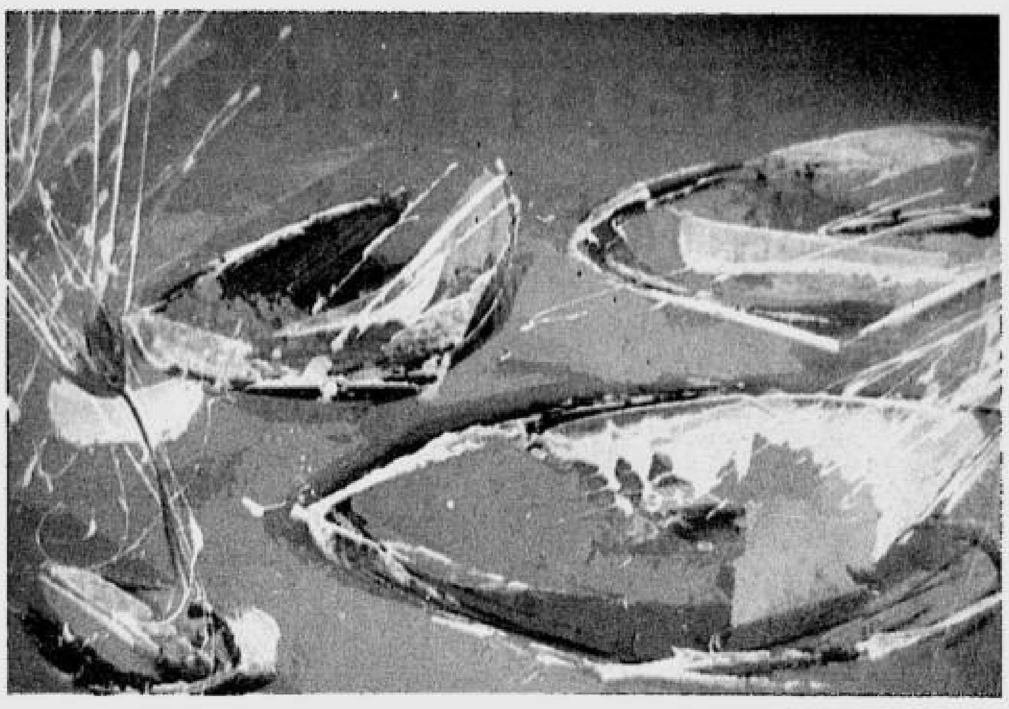


"I JUST Want to See an Angel Kissing a Woman" by Cristina Taniguchi



"SPECIMEN # 1" by Nona Garcia

VISUAL ARTS

Garcia's 'New Specimen' at West; Mellor does 1st solo in RP

NONA Garcia reinvestigates landscape painting in a fresh collection of works, "New Specimen," which runs May 22-June 3, West Gallery, Glorietta 4. Call 7527028/29.

IVEE Olivares-Mellor holds her first solo exhibit in the Philippines at The Drawing Room, G/F, Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati, until June 4. Call 897-7877/6990.

KULAY Diwa Galleries presents three exhibits featuring Cristina Taniguchi from Dumaguete City, Ruel Salvatierra from Vigan City and Rey Bollozos from Cagayan de Oro City. The exhibits will be on view until June 8.

"LIKHANG Kalamba," a group painting exhibit, is on view at the Syano Artlink, 19 Shanghai St., Better Living Subdivision, Parañaque. Participating artists are June V. Bayani, Palardon Bawiin, Rolando Calderon, Noel Amano, Madeline Vergara Carreon, Reynan Tanyag, Romeo Gabad, Edgar Mangeron, Junille Vasquez, Reggie Tanyag, Philip Cudiamat, Apo Garcia, Francis Bawiin Jr., Jun Revilla, Jun Caparaz, Leidon Cruz, Yunus Samaniego, Mark Vibat, Vic de Guzman, Ken Bayani, Cheng Sandicho, and Tom Alvarado.

HERZON and Rhea de la Rosa present "Genre, Naturalistic and Cultural Dance" in honor of their father, Ibarra, and in celebration of the 105th year of Philippine Independence. Each will have six solo exhibitions of their artworks from May 23 to July 5. The City Painting Tour Exhibition will be held at Seattle, Shoreline, Bellevue, Renton, Tacoma and Bremerton, Washington, United States.

"LIGHT and shadow: A Vintage Black and White Photo Exhibit" is ongoing at The Alcove Photo Gallery until May 23. The exhibit is the culmination of a six-day workshop on black-and-white photography conducted by Eyeasia at Filipinas Heritage Library led by Kat Palasi and Vir Montecastro.

Participating artists are Nieves B. Alvarez, Johanna Boestel, Dr. Emily S. Bomasang, Candy Cantada, Darwin G. Chiong, Mariann Africa-de Dios, Carol Gancia, Margie Lopa-Perez, Rhoda Ramos, Valerie Anne M. Rivas, Chinqui Roldan, Dino B. Romano, and Bernadette E. Tamayo.

FHL is located at Makati Ave., Ayala Triangle, Makati City. Call 8921801 or 7593371.

AN EXHIBIT of recent works of Dionesio Gonzales, "The Wild Touch," installed by Ayala Museum at Food and Art Gallerie at the 12th floor of the George Ty Tower on Ayala Avenue, is on view until May 31. The exhibit features 36 oil on canvas paintings.

JEMINA presents her fifth solo exhibit "Breathing Space," at The Big & Small Art Co., 4/L, Building A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong, on May 21-June 2. Call 687-7425.

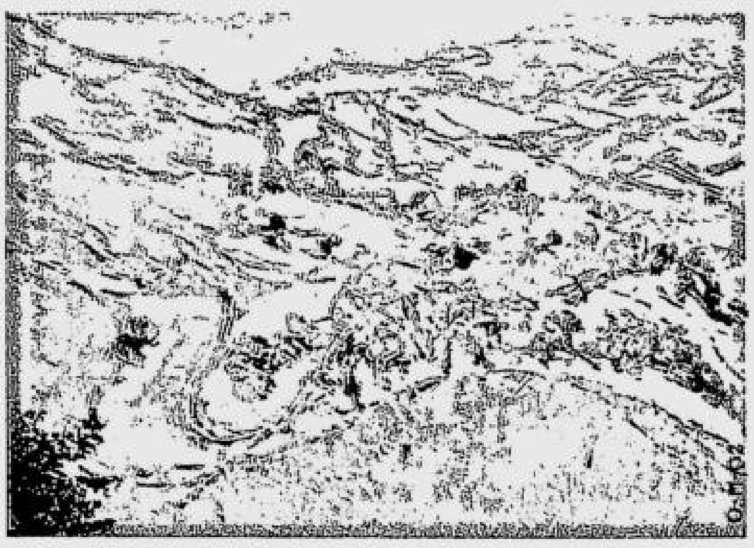
VINCENT Padilla, Jerson Samson, Elmer Roslin and Riel Hilario examine the personal and social dimensions of male desire and gaze in "Libog," an exhibit of paintings at Boston Gallery, 2-A Boston St., Cubao, Quezon City, until May 31. Call 722-9205.

ARTIST Joel V. Cristobal is shown with his guests of honor during the formal opening of his third one-man exhibit, "Reflections." They are Rev. Fr. Lito Rocero from Sta. Cecilia Parish in San Mateo, Rizal; architect Rogelio Caringal, curator of the Art Gallery, Philippine Heart Center. The guests are joined by Milagros F. Lane, manager of Galeria de las Islas in Intramuros, and friends of the artist from San Mateo. On view are works in oil on canvas focusing on different churches and towers in the Philippines. The exhibit runs until May 20, at Galeria de las Islas, 3/F, Silahis Center, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. Call 527213.

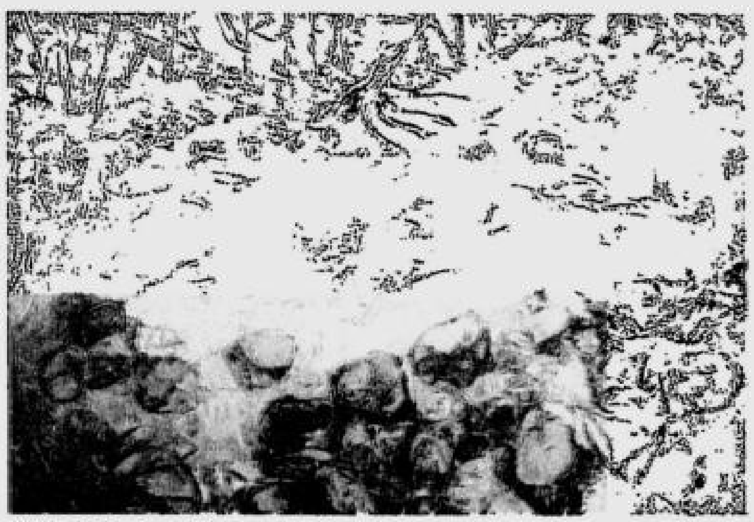
"IMPRESSIONISTS," an exhibit of paintings by Popo San Pascual, Pardo de Leon, Jet Melencio and Corinne Ching, features new abstractions. The exhibit is on show at The Podium in Ortigas Center until June 8. The last two legs will be in Malate, Manila (June 11-29) and Greenbelt 3, Makati (July 4-Aug. 1).

ART in the Park at Quezon Memorial Circle offers art workshop for children ages 5-9 until May 30. Activities include drawing, painting and crafts. Schedule is on Monday, Wednesday and Friday for 10 sessions.

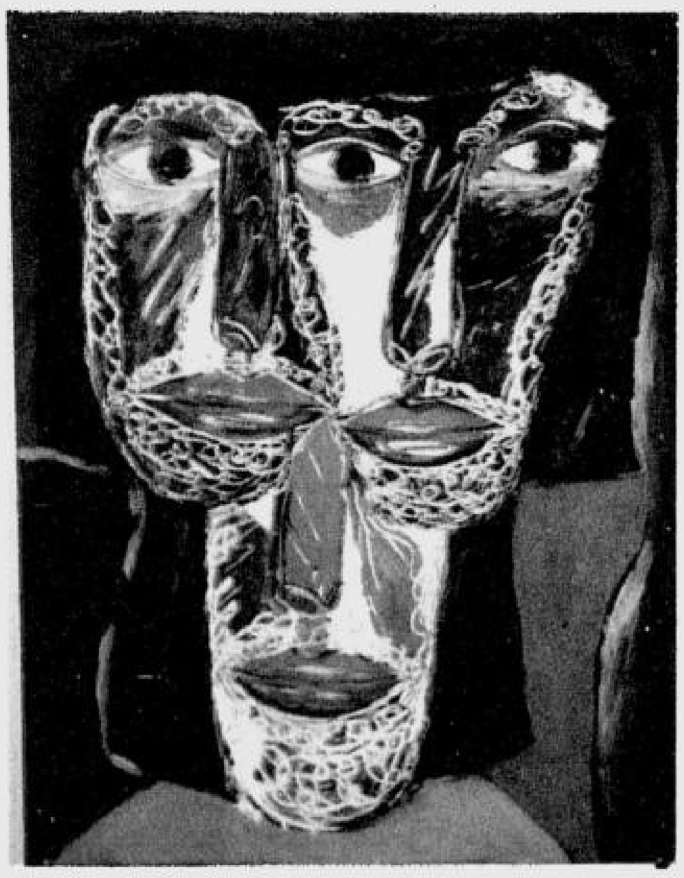
Art in the Park is at the Administration Building, Quezon Memorial Circle, QC. Call 926-0193 (telefax), (0919) 262-7974, 435-3600.



"RHYTHM of the Hills" by Ivee Olivares-Mellor



"POOL" by Ivee Olivares-Mellor



"IMAGINATION" by Dionesio Gonzales

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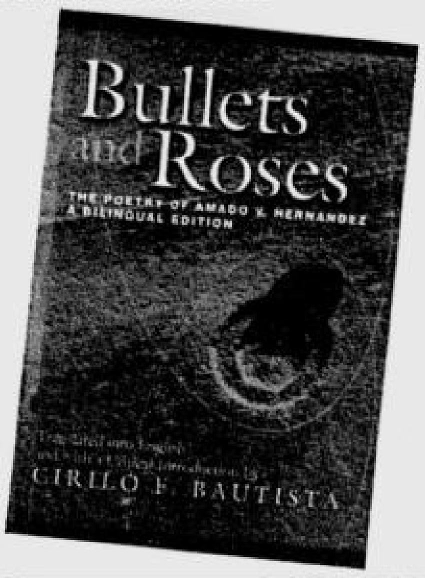
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LIFESTYLE Books

Being Amado V. Hernandez

Master poet Cirilo Bautista critiques and translates one of our greatest writers



Bullets and Roses: The Poetry of Amado V. Hernandez, A Bilingual Edition
Translated into English and with a Critical Introduction
By Cirilo F. Bautista
De La Salle University Press, Manila
2003, 165 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

TWO POWERFUL forces in Philippine poetics come together in the landmark book "Bullets and Roses: The Poetry of Amado V. Hernandez, A Bilingual Edition."

BEING/ H3

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Life and death in 'The Hours'

STREEP

By Noel Ramiscal
Contributor

REVIEW

THE MOVIE juxtaposed in a day three lives of women from three different times. Virginia Woolf (Nicole Kidman), "confined" in a suburb outside London by her benevolent husband, is starting and resolving the last conflict in her novel, "Mrs. Dalloway," while struggling with and finally giving in to the forces that made death her only viable option.

A fragile housewife in the 1950s (Julianne Moore) cares for a family made up of a war veteran and a young boy, while carrying past her second trimester, a baby that will turn out to be a daughter she will never know.

A contemporary lesbian editor (Meryl Streep) grapples with the presentiment of losing her former male gay lover dying of AIDS, and actually witnessing his suicide.

The hours of that one day revolved around the preparation for something monumental and something trivial: Woolf deciding the fate of Mrs. Dalloway while sending her maid to London for some ginger to put in the tea for her visiting relations; the housewife baking a perfect cake for her husband, after botching the first one, then hieing off her kid to a nanny while she goes to a hotel to kill herself and then deciding to choose life; the editor picking up the fresh bouquets of flowers for a party she set for her former gay lover who just won a lifetime poetry prize and then confronting the mother of her lover, several hours after he flung himself to his death... the mother being the '50s housewife who abandoned her family after giving birth to her second child...

MOORE

The plot's complexity should not work as a movie, but it does, to devastating effect. The hours flow and ebb with the music of the characters' inner lives. They meander to connections, to moments, to images that stay clear in the mind long after the last tear is shed: Kidman (with the prosthetic nose) eyeing and being the last vision of the dead bird found in her garden; Moore clutching her belly and being engulfed in her dream of the sea washing her over; Streep flinging her hands and breaking down in the kitchen, her eyes and lips, the very picture of despair transmuted to awareness. Then there are the searing kisses each woman implant on other women, serving as a connection, a beacon on the bleakest hours of the soul.

And the words... they clutch at the throat, especially those uttered by Woolf/Kidman at the train station where she makes an impassioned plea to her husband, for her right to choose, even as a "madwoman," the way to live her life, and by implication, the way to end it.

Who should die? It is the poet, the visionary, says Woolf/Kidman, to make us understand the value of life. And it does.

"To look at life in the face, to love it and to put it away"... The movie begins and ends with Woolf/Kidman putting stones in her jacket and descending to the bottom of the river to find the peace she longs for.

It is amazing that a movie so emphatic about death could be so buoyant.

Streep and Moore limn their characters with telling compassion. No word, no gesture is trivialized nor wasted. But it is the luminous Kidman, with her fierce command of her character, who provides the moral center for all the connections. In Woolf, she inhabits the dark side of genius, and illuminates it with painstaking bravura.

If you only watch one or two movies in a year, don't forget this one.

KIDMAN

Award-winning movie still falls short of award-winning book

The Hours
By Michael Cunningham
228 pages

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

REVIEW

IF YOU watched Pedro Almodovar's newest movie, "Talk To Her," you might have noticed the journalist Marco, played by Dario Grandinetti, waking up and dropping a copy of "The Hours."

Marco, like other tortured souls who watched the award-winning screen adaptation of "The Hours," probably thought the book would clarify things. But he was wrong. The movie version might have been faithful to the book but even if it won the Golden Globe Best Picture Award and Nicole Kidman as Virginia Woolf won the Golden Globe and Oscar Awards for Best Actress, I still think the book is better.

The book, like the movie, begins with Woolf filling her pockets with heavy stones as she goes deeper into a river. Beginning with suicide is a courageous act for a novelist and Michael Cunningham makes sure we finish reading the novel with his magic shuffling of real and imagined characters and era.

Those watching the beginning of the movie must be thinking: Will Kidman's prosthetic nose melt as she plunges into the river?

Cunningham quotes Borges and Woolf to justify the blending of the story. The novel is a triptych. Woolf is in the London suburb of Richmond struggling with her provincial life as she tries to finish her novel, "Mrs. Dalloway." In another story, Laura Brown (Julianne Moore) in the suburb of Los Angeles struggles with her husband's birthday cake in 1949. At the end of the 20th century, Clarissa Vaughan (portrayed by Meryl Streep) is preparing a party for her lover Richard, a poet who is dying of AIDS.

As the novel progresses, the characters almost come together. Woolf decides that her Mrs. Dalloway will not die. Somebody else will.

Brown loves the novel so much she brings it with her to a hotel room where she prepares to die.

Vaughan, a book editor, was called Mrs. Dalloway by Richard in their college days. At the start of her story, she is carrying flowers just like the fictional Mrs. Dalloway at the start of Woolf's novel.

The real Woolf had an affair with Vita Sackville-West, Vaughan is a lesbian and Brown can't get over a kiss from Kitty, her neighbor. But these underlying sexual tensions do not figure much in the novel.

Then there is Richard, the poet, who surfaces as a child in one of three stories. He is writing a semi-autobiography where he kills his mother and his real mother feels grateful as she tells that story. The acknowledgments and notes at the back suggests that Cunningham took pains to recreate Woolf's last days. And this so-called literary nonfiction blew off all other examples of the mini-genre.

Cunningham, who won a Pulitzer Prize for this book, also breathed life into the other characters. Brown, he said in earlier interviews, was based on his mother. Her story, a suburban queen struggling for higher things in life, is almost every other housewife's story. Cunningham brought it out in glorious detail in so small a space.

Streep's casting as Vaughan seems to be a weird choice as she is mentioned in the novel. Vaughan, in the book, thinks she has seen the actress inside her trailer and it leads her to ruminate about the permanence of celebrities.

Not much happens in the novel but the women's thoughts (considering it was a man who wrote them) move the readers. There are so many passages you will highlight not because of the *bons mots* but because of the elegance of the prose.

Here is Vaughan thinking of her early days with Richard: "What lives undimmed in Clarissa's mind more than three decades later is a kiss at dusk on a patch of dead grass, and a walk around a pond as mosquitoes droned in the darkening air. There is still that singular perfection, and it's perfect in part because it seemed, at the time, so clearly to promise more. Now she knows: that was the moment, right then. There has been no other."

And as Woolf starts another day of writing, "At this moment there are infinite possibilities, whole hours ahead. Her mind hums. This morning she may penetrate the obfuscation, the clogged pipes, to reach the gold."

In this complex novel, the gold ores are everywhere but it is the connections of the caves (the Woolf epigram) that will lead you to the light.

Summer reads from Powerbooks

SUMMER is the best time to catch up on your reading. The lazy afternoons and humid nights are best survived by curling up with a good book. Here are Powerbooks Specialty Store's recommended reads for the month of May:

The Monk Downstairs

An unlikely friendship grows between Rebecca Martin, a struggling single mother, and Michael Christopher, an ex-monk adjusting to his new job flipping burgers at McDonald's after 20 years of living in isolation. As the relationship deepens, Rebecca begins to glimpse the real mystery of love and the unfathomable depths of faith.

Einstein's Dreams

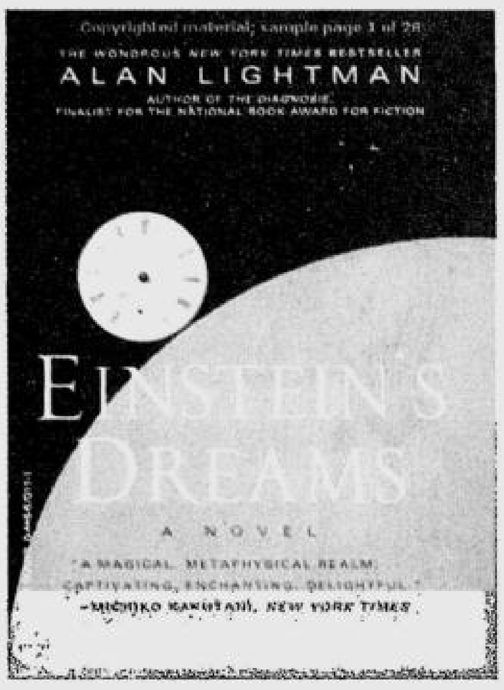
An extraordinary and highly-acclaimed work by physicist Alan Lightman, this book consists of thirty fables that imagine what Albert Einstein's dreams must have been like in 1905, in those months when he is nearly done with his special theory of relativity. Lightman conjures up as many theoretical realms of time, adventure, glory and possibility as there are nights to dream them, with visions that gently probe the essence of Einstein's universe.

The Stone Monkey

The FBI enlists the help of forensics expert Lincoln Rhyme and his protegee Amelia Sachs to capture "the Ghost"—a homicidal immigrant smuggler. Lincoln and Amelia race against time to find the families the Ghost wants to silence forever in this nail-biting suspense novel.

Paradise

Another Toni Morrison classic, Paradise is set in the fictitious black town of Ruby, founded by proud, racially pure men who emerged from the fight against slavery, only to find that there was yet another hierarchy—this time based on gradations of skin color—to keep them down.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THE WONDROUS NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
ALAN LIGHTMAN
AUTHOR OF THE DIAGNOSIS
FINALIST FOR THE NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR FICTION
EINSTEIN'S DREAMS
A NOVEL
"A MAGICAL, METAPHYSICAL REALM; CAPTIVATING, ENCHANTING, DELIGHTFUL."
—MICHIKO KAKUTANI, NEW YORK TIMES

The Remains of the Day

A profoundly compelling portrait of the perfect English butler and his fading, insular world in upper-class England. This Booker Prize-winning novel by Kazuo Ishiguro examines the costs of pride and loyalty, as Stevens the butler embarks on a country drive and looks back to reassure himself that he has served humanity by serving "a great gentleman."

Beethoven's Hair

A rich historical treasure hunt, this book is about an attempt to subject a lock of Ludwig Van Beethoven's hair to DNA and other tests to reveal the causes of the composer's famously bad health, his dearness, and his final demise. The results are nothing short of startling.

Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell

As Secretary of State, he's the man of the hour as America navigates the tricky waters of a changed, post-9/11 world. With his track record, four-star general Colin Powell has established an entirely new paradigm for leadership excellence. Learn from his strategies in this book.

Healing With Aromatherapy

An invaluable guide through the wonderful and odorous world of essential oils—their history, their origins and the many ways they can be used to treat a host of common conditions, including pain, menstrual disorders, digestive complaints and children's ailments.

Read To Me: Raising Kids Who Love to Read

Written by well-known reading specialist Bernice E. Cullinan, this book is an accessible and informative guidebook to the wonders of reading aloud to your children. It includes sensible advice and tips on when to start reading to your child, how to use television, and how to make a reader or writer out of your child.

The Hollywood Book of Death

An exhaustive encyclopedia of celebrity deaths that tells all the gory details. Examples: Which blond bombshell died with a carload of Chihuahuas on board? What bloodthirsty film star insisted on being buried in his Dracula cape? Which washed-up starlet took a swan dive off the Hollywood sign? Read on and find out!

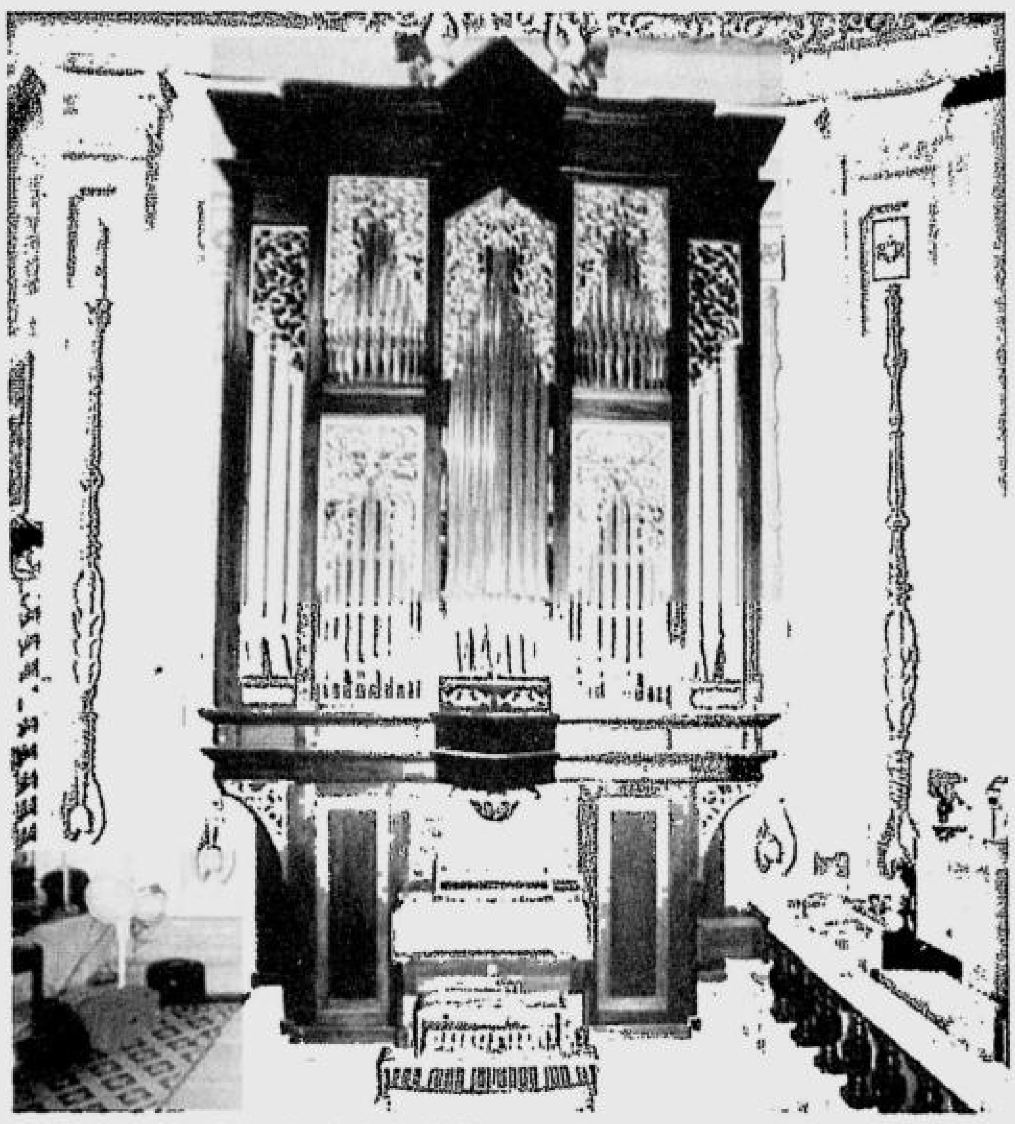
Rare pipe organ reinstalled in Lipa cathedral

THE MAGNIFICENT 34-year-old pipe organ of the San Sebastian Cathedral in Lipa City was blessed and launched recently after a concelebrated Mass led by the Most Rev. Gaudencio B. Rosales, D.D., Archbishop of Lipa. A Pipe Organ Concerto featuring organists Armando Salarza, Rev. Fr. Manny Marfori, Rev. Fr. Bong Panganiban and Rodel Garcia together with The Festival Choir of Las Piñas, St. Scholastica's College Chamber Orchestra and The Seraphim of Lipa City will follow immediately inside the Cathedral.

Considered rare, being one of only 59 units in the Philippines and the only one in Batangas Province, the 1500-stoplist mechanical pipe organ's repair and rehabilitation by the Diego Cera Organbuilders took over two years at a staggering cost of P3.3 million.

The splendid pipe organ is the fitting crown to the grand San Sebastian Cathedral which has also been undergoing repair, restoration and reconstruction in full glory since year 2000. As the Decree on Sacred Liturgy 120, Vatican Council, states: "The pipe organ is to be held in high esteem in the Latin Church, for it is the traditional musical instrument the sound of which can add a wonderful splendor to the Church's ceremonies and powerfully lifts up men's mind to God and higher things."

Funds were derived from solicitations here and abroad by the Msgr. Alfredo A. Madlangbayan, Parish Priest of San Sebastian Cathedral Parish. He also instigated fundraising events like the musical concert of the Sining Kumintang of Bauan, a golf tournament at the Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club; and the Domkantorei Graz Concert. He also preferred donations to the project instead of personal gifts for his birthday and sacerdotal anniversary celebrations for the last two years.



PIPE organ of San Sebastian Cathedral in Lipa.

Creative writing seminar for teachers at UST

THE UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas Center for Creative Writing and Studies is now accepting manuscripts for the Faculty Creative Writing Workshop, to be held on June 2-5, 2003 at the Center for Creative Writing and Studies, ground floor, St. Raymund's Bldg., UST campus, España, Manila.

The workshop is open to faculty members belonging to the Dominican Network of Schools, Colleges and Universities. It will focus on poetry and fiction, in English and Filipino.

An applicant should submit a hard copy of his/her manuscript, including a virus-free encoded copy (MS Word) containing at least five (5) poems and/or two (2) short stories, a resume, and 2x2 ID photo. Applicants should also submit a certification duly signed by the head of his/her department/college that the articles are authentic and have not been copied elsewhere. There are (15) fellowships available.

To conduct the workshop are Ophelia A. Dimalanta, Cirilo F. Bautista, Michael M. Coroza, Rebecca Añonuevo, Lourd de Veyra, Ramil Gulle and Jose Victor Torres.

Deadline for submission is on May 23.

Contact 731-3101 loc. 8281.

UP students relaunch Philippine Philatelic Museum

THE PHILIPPINE Philatelic Museum and Library was relaunched by the Philippine Arts 164 (Curatorship and Collections Management) class of Prof. Kenneth C. Esguerra of the Department of Arts and Communication, University of the Philippines Manila.

Featured in the Philippine Philatelic Museum is an exhibition titled "Coreo Filipino: Ciento y Cinco Años ng Serbisyo." The development of the Philippine Postal System is given emphasis in this show. It traces the historical development of the Philippine postal service covering the period from pre-Hispanic to the present. Authentic Post Office equipment such as old typewriters, weighing scale, registered mail meter, mint stamps and photographs that would tell the story of the postal system in the country may be viewed.

The Coreo Filipino exhibition is open to the public Monday to Friday, 8-12 a.m. and 1-5 p.m. It is located at the Philippine Post Office Annex Building, Lawton, Manila. Admission is free.

Being Amado V. Hernandez

From page H1

Hernandez (1903-1970), the author of the sweeping and powerful collection "Isang Dipang Langit" and a National Artist for Literature, has always been considered a great among Tagalog writers, an undisputed canonical writer.

But in his substantial and precise introduction to "Bullets and Roses," master poet and critic Cirilo F. Bautista argues that Hernandez is much more than that.

"Hernandez," he writes, "transcends the boundaries of regional strictures and stands as a verbal creator of national stature. He is not simply a Tagalog poet, but a poet of the whole nation."

At first blush, Hernandez's life is seemingly the stuff of a good novel. Tondo-bred, he became a newsman and even an elected official before becoming a labor leader. He was jailed in 1951 on charges of subversion.

Released in 1956, he spent the rest of his life writing for newspapers. He married the pioneering stage and cinema luminary Atang de la Rama, who also became National Artist.

His time behind bars served as the seed for the seminal poem "Isang Dipang Langit." Hernandez's poems as well as his novels "Ibong Mandaragit" and "Luha ng Buwaya" are classroom staples. "Bullets and Roses," however, focuses on the poems from the titular collection.

Yet now Bautista, who has himself won practically every poetic prize there is to win, makes Hernandez accessible to an entirely new generation of readers. With his pinpoint and compelling translations of 46 Hernandez poems, Bautista injects newfound vigor into the Hernandez experience while maintaining the nobility and solidity of the poet's original intentions.

It all begins with Bautista's 42-page introduction, "The Poetry of Bullets and Roses." Bautista points out the various elements in Hernandez's work that make him a Filipino poet of the first degree regardless of language.

"In (his case), there was very little attempt at concealment. His poetry is his biography." In tracing the tortuous trajectory of Hernandez's life, Bautista also unearths the late great writer's poetics, showing how Hernandez gained and lost the sense of humor in his poetry.

More crucially, Bautista explains what sets Hernandez apart even from other contemporaries: "Hernandez differed from his poetic peers because he was also a labor leader. It was in being such that his direct involvement in hard realities commenced and his militant consciousness took definite shape."

In that book of poems, Bautista states, "the final configuration of his aesthetics shows a harmonizing of the struggle for the attainment of poetic progress and its manifestation in artistic linguistic expression. In effect, a poetry of bullets and roses."

After one takes the time to absorb Bautista's original and helpful notes, it is time to experience an entirely new dimension to Hernandez's works. The 46 poems here, Bautista notes, "are more than enough to give the desired comprehensive and credible examination. They reflect to a great degree the growth and culmination of Hernandez's socially realistic romanticism."

REVIEW

Side by side with the Tagalog originals, the translations in "Bullets and Roses" shimmer with truth: "The true poem is like an arrow,/ that always hits the chosen mark" ("A Poem on Poetry"). Others, such as "The Stars Are Sad," still reflect the romanticism of his earlier writings: "Still, without fail, to wait I continue,/ my singular hope and joy are you;/ is it not that the stars will shine again,/ April will smile with a newborn beauty,/ and our love will live for eternity?"

Others still the readers such as the poignancy in a prison visit in the poem "Tranquility": "the father forgot he was prisoner,/ the mother forgot that she was not well,/ and the young child forgot her tattered clothes;/ amidst the thorns the rose is beautiful... / for a few moments the three together/ felt that not all in the world was bitter."

Every translated poem is a device of meticulous construction and social commentary. In "The Soldier and the Huk," Hernandez paints a portrait of a country's inner conflict manifested in its frontline warriors and the ultimate, tragic connection: "At last, the huk and the soldier had met,/ now embracing each other when about to die;/ the moon wept... / for they discovered to their breaking heart/ they were brothers who had long been apart."

The piece de resistance, of course, is the poem "An Armstretch of Sky." Bautista and Hernandez combine their considerable powers in a masterstroke of literary construction. This tale of confinement takes on a new urgency: "A crafty leader imprisoned me/ in his desire my spirit to enchain,/ he said when the weak body surrenders,/ the heart is crushed, will not rebel again."

Hernandez speaks of the claustrophobic atmosphere of his cell: "From the narrow window all I can see/ is an armstretch of sky full of tears,/ a meager cover to a wounded heart,/ a ghastly emblem of my fall and fears." In the rest of the poem, one sees the determination to survive and to triumph; all in all, a rousing revolution of poetic strength.

This is only one of the many great moments in "Bullets and Roses." This is not just a book for interested academics and curious students. Through Cirilo F. Bautista's astute detective work and intricate translations, Amado V. Hernandez's poems come alive with renewed purpose and energy.

"Bullets and Roses" thus is a definitive portal for an entirely new audience to get into the mind and heart of one of the country's greatest writers—a definite must-read for the next generation of Filipinos.

(Available at leading bookstores)

> The two poets combine their considerable powers in a masterstroke of literary construction

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BEYBLADE enthusiasts can now grab copies of two Beyblade books at National Book Store.

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BATTLE SPIN UP GUIDEBOOK

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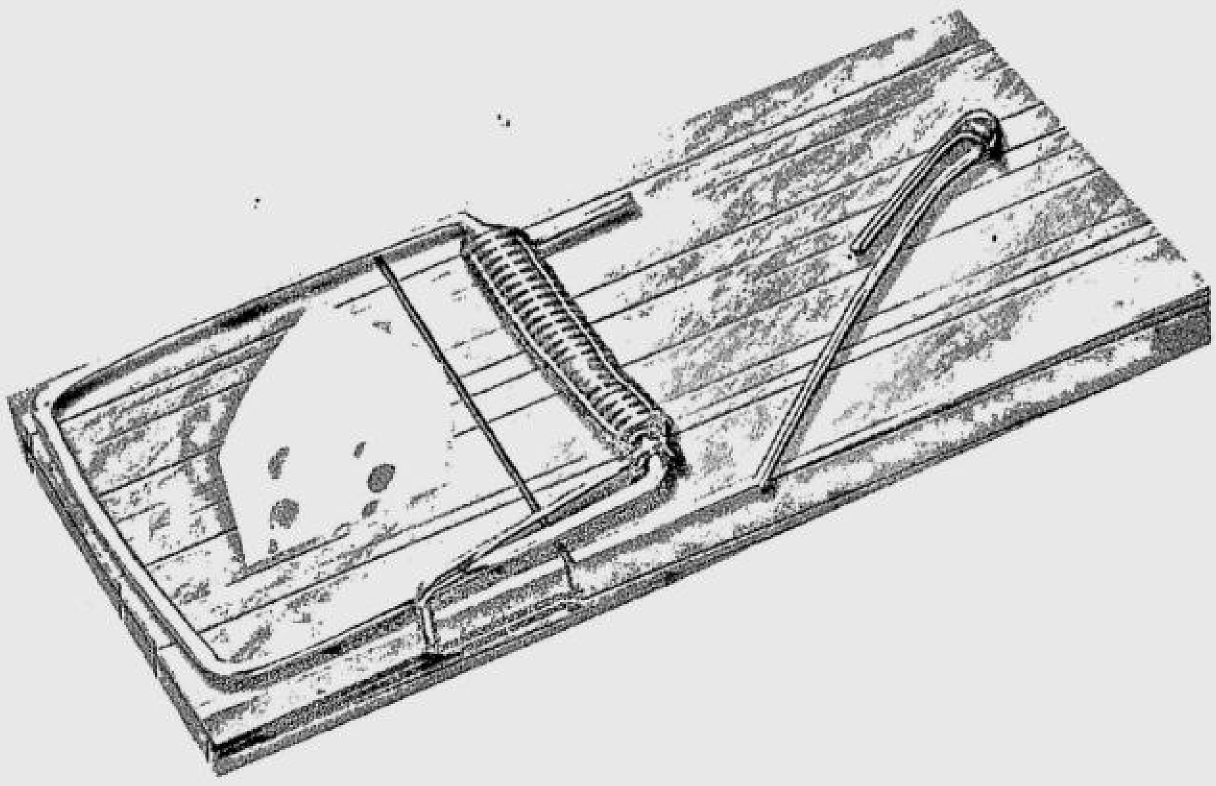
Libros Filipinos is open 9a.m.-6 p.m. Monday to Friday. Call 892-1801 or e-mail libros@fillib.org.ph. Filipinas Heritage Library is along Makati Avenue opposite The Peninsula Manila.



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Gracia Burnham's book now in bookstores

THE CONTROVERSIAL book "In the Presence of My Enemies," written by American missionary and ex-Abu Sayyaf hostage Gracia Burnham (with Dean Merrill), is now available at all National Book Store branches.

IN THE PRESENCE OF MY ENEMIES
GRACIA BURNHAM
with Dean Merrill

Written a year after Gracia's rescue and the death of her husband Martin, the book has caused a stir due to its explosive charges of collusion between the Abu Sayyaf and certain members of the Philippine Armed Forces.

However, the book moves beyond these controversial soundbites to explore questions of faith, love and courage in the face of casual brutality and hellish struggle.

Along with other hostages, the Burnhams were kidnapped by the Abu Sayyaf in 2001, and for over a year, were subjected to near-starvation, constant exhaustion, frequent gun battles, and coldhearted murder. Yet, in the midst of this harrowing ordeal, Gracia writes that she found her courage and held on to her faith in a God who seemed to have forgotten them.

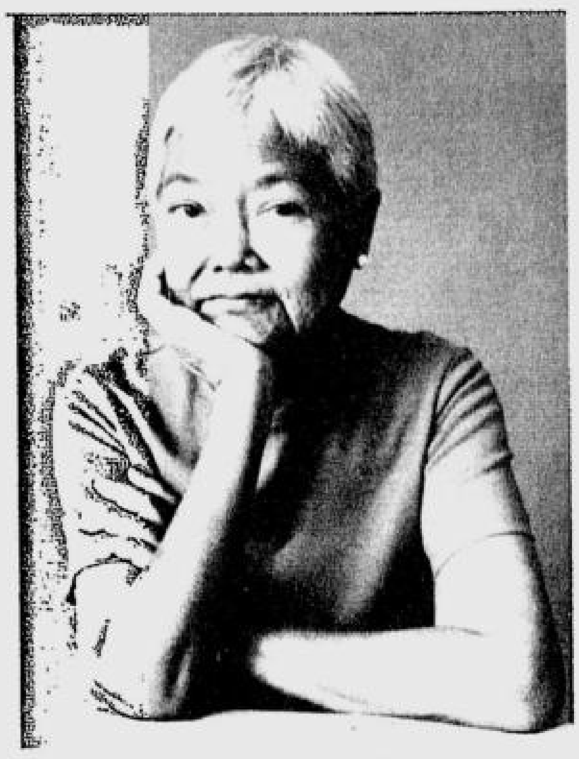
As USA Today comments, the book's most powerful point... "is not why an all-powerful God might choose to subject a man to evil, but how a man, with God's help, responds to evil."

"In the Presence of My Enemies" is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by OMF Literature Inc., in partnership with Tyndale House Publishers Inc.

The book is also available at Powerbooks Specialty Store, Christian bookstores nationwide, and OMF Lit bookstores in Metro Manila and Cebu. Call 532-7754 or 532-5736, or OMF Lit Cebu at (32) 412-5543.

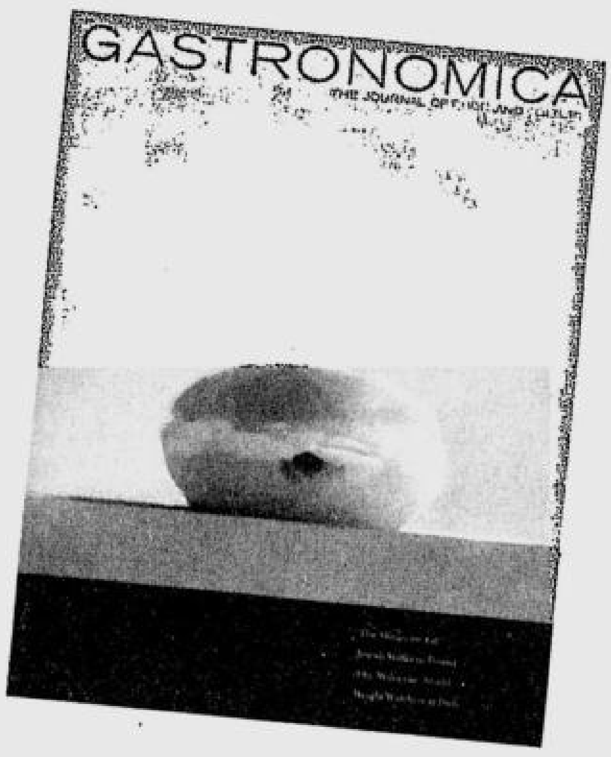
Culture Ingested

On the Indigenization of Philippine Food



Food journal remembers Doreen Fernandez

ANVIL Publishing and Powerbooks pay tribute to the late Doreen Fernandez, author, teacher, food columnist and critic, with the release of "Gastronomica: The Journal of Food and Culture."



Published by the University of California Press, "Gastronomica" features two articles on Fernandez.

In a write-up by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett on Fernandez's career as food writer Gimblett emphasizes that, for Fernandez, Filipino food was a translation of Filipino experiences.

"Doreen literally made sense of food. Her goal was to create sensory reverberations in the reader that would trigger memories and spark historical insights. To that end, she turned to fishermen and farmers, vendors and cooks. They were her living archives of culinary knowledge."

Gimblett's observations are evident in the second article, written by Fernandez herself, titled "Culture Ingested."

"The Filipino conquers the foreign taste and culture with an army of *sawsawan*, insists on participation and involvement, accepts nothing passively, but takes an active part in the creation of his food. The *sawsawan* is not dish-specific, not assigned to particular recipes, although there are some traditional partners. This is, indeed, an arsenal with which to meet and subdue the foreign invader, and render him/it acceptable to the native culture. It indicates an ethos completely different from that prevailing in France, where the chef is master creator and has sole authority over the dish. For the diner to tamper with it is discourtesy and insult. In the Philippine experience, the diner cooperates and participates, and the creation is communal. The *sawsawan* thus transforms not only the taste, but also the relationship behind the experience."

The essay is a thorough discussion on Fernandez's observations on how native food, regardless of origin, has become distinctly and deliciously Filipino.

As food writer, Fernandez published "Sarap" (1988) and "Tikim" (1994), essays culled from her regular column, In Good Taste, in the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER. She also wrote series of guides to Philippine restaurants; "Kinilaw: Philippine Cuisine of Freshness" (1991); a book on rare Philippine fruits, "Fruits of the Philippines" (1997); and "Palayok: Philippine Food Through Time, On Site, In the Pot" (2000).

Limited copies of "Gastronomica" Winter 2003 issue are currently available at Powerbooks, Ateneo Office of Research and Publications and Anvil Publishing. Call 671-9235/671-1899 or Powerbooks at 635-2899/844-4455.

Book looks into Filipino nurses' migration

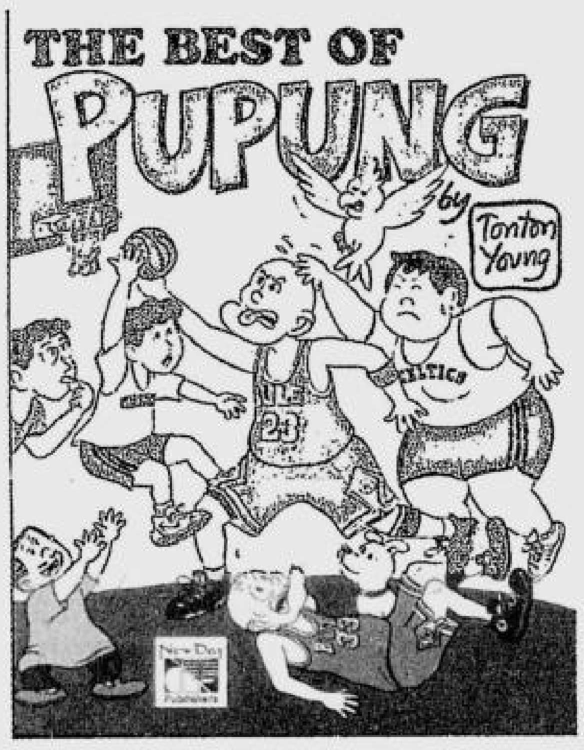
CATHERINE Ceniza Choy tackles the issue of the migration of nurses in "Empire of Care: Nursing and Migration in Filipino American History."

This is the first book-length study of the history of Filipino nurses in the United States. The Ateneo de Manila University Press co-published the book with Duke University Press.

Choy looks at the unique relationship between the professionalization of nursing and the 20th century migration of Filipinos to the United States.

She also discusses the complicated connections among nursing, American colonialism, and the racialization of Filipinos.

Call 4265984/6001 local 4612 and 4613.



CARTOONIST Tonton Young, creator of the comic series Pupung in the Manila Bulletin, is National Bookstore's Author of the Month. His books will be displayed prominently in all branches of the bookstore. Young published his first book in 1992, "The Best of Pupung," a 78-page collection of his comic strips with New Day Publishers. This was followed by eight more editions. The late cartoonist Larry Alcala said Young's childlike approach to humor appealed to both young and old.

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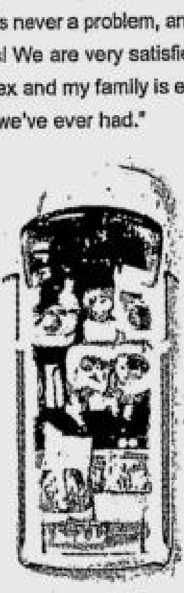

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